Tamil TIMES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTON

UK/India/Sri Lanka .....£15/US$25
Australia.....AusS45
(Australian Bank cheques only)
USA.....US$35
Canada .....Can$40
All other countries .....£20/US$35

Vol XX1V No 9 ISSN 0266 - 4488 SEPTEMBER 2005 90p

Premier Mahinda Rajapakse and President Chandrika Kumaratunga in animated discussion at the National Convention of the SLFP; and (below) Mahinda Rajapakse and JVP Secretary Tilvyn Silva signing their pact

TAPROBANE TRAVEL 1977 28 2005 ANNIVERSARY

The reliable agent

TAPROBANE TRAVEL/SRI LANKA TOURS

Celebrating a 25 Year Partnership with SriLankan Airlines...

Number 1 for flights to Sri Lanka

COLOMBO RETURN

SRILANKAN AIRLINES from £410* + Taxes valid 01 Aug - 30 Nov
SRILANKAN AIRLINES from £450 + Taxes valid 20 Aug - 13 Dec
EMIRATES from £450 + Taxes valid 01 Sep - 13 Dec
ETIHAD AIRWAYS from £365** + Taxes valid 01 Sep - 30 Nov
QATAR AIRWAYS from £360 + Taxes valid 03 Aug - 18 Sep
KUWAIT AIRWAYS from £370 + Taxes valid 01 Sep - 09 Dec
*- on selected flights **- excluding 21 Oct - 27 Oct

X'mas fares

SRILANKAN AIRLINES from £645 + Taxes valid 14 Dec - 24 Dec
EMIRATES from £645 + Taxes valid 14 Dec - 24 Dec
ETIHAD AIRWAYS from £550 + Taxes valid 10 Dec - 24 Dec

INDIA SPECIALS ON SRILANKAN AIRLINES

from £325* + Taxes valid 01 Sep - 30 Nov (no stop in CMB)
(Chennai/Trivandrum/Kochi/Bangalore)
*- on selected flights

INDIA/FAR EAST SPECIALS ON SRILANKAN AIRLINES

from £360 + Taxes valid 20/08 - 30/11 (no stop in CMB)
from £450 + Taxes valid 20/08 - 30/11 (with a stop in CMB)
(Trichi/Hyderabad/Delhi/Bombay/Bangkok/HongKong/
Singapore/Kuala Lumpur)

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL ON EMIRATES

from £565 + Taxes valid for travel in November 2005
(Sydney/Melbourne/Brisbane)
from £615 + Taxes valid for travel in November 2005
(Auckland/Christchurch)

74136 ATOL PROTECTED IATA

For reservations contact our travel consultants;
Kamini, Lucky, Chris, Upali, Manouri or Adrian
19 Golden Square, London W1F 9HD
www.srilankatours.co.uk/www.srilankans.com
immediate travel only - 07860 439483

020 7437 6272, 020 7434 3921, 020 7734 9078

"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it"
- Voltaire

Tamil TIMES

ISSN 0266 – 44 88
Vol. XXIV No.9
SEPTEMBER 2005

Published by:
TAMIL TIMES LTD
PO Box 121, Sutton,
Surrey SM1 3TD
United Kingdom
Phone: 020 – 8644 0972
Fax: 020 – 8241 4557

Email: admin@tamiltimes.org
editor@tamiltimes.org
p.rajanayagam@btconnect.com
Website: http://www.tamiltimes.org

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
UK/India/Sri Lanka.....£15/US$25
Australia.....Aus$45
(Australian Bank cheques only)
USA.....US$35
Canada.....Can$40
All other countries.....£20.US$35

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork.

CONTENTS

A Pact from Hell	03
CFA talks stalled	05
News Review	07
Mahinda-JVP Pact	11
A recipe for disaster	17
Election: preventing polarisation	18
Call for peace process review	20
Heavy price for JVP support	21
South Asia Scene	23
Moderate Muslim?	26
Anandarajan	28
News Track	29
Strengthening security	36
Classified	37

A Pact from Hell

The JVP leadership must be jubilant that it had virtually pulled off a political coup with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse subscribing to their 12-point "Pact from Hell". As for the affable PM, who is reputed to be a friend of the common and downtrodden people, it represents a political blunder of monumental proportions for himself, his party and the country. In his defence one can only say that as a man too busy to go into details of any issue, he has been manoeuvred into the JVP trap by one or more of his trusted political friends. When one has friends like these who led him into this course of action, he needs no enemies.

Even before the battle with his main presidential rival has begun, Rajapakse has set himself on a collision course with his own party's leader, President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (CBK) who is said to be furious with many aspects of Rajapakse's agreement with the JVP which he entered into without the consent of his party.

It has to be conceded that CBK's historic contribution has been to transform the SLFP which was perceived as an exclusively Sinhala-Buddhist party into a 'national' party capable of representing the interests and obtaining the support of all the communities, including the minority Muslims and Tamils. Under her leadership, the Peoples Alliance of which the SLFP was the senior partner, jettisoned adherence to the "unitary state" concept and adopted the paradigm of a federal solution to the island's long-running ethnic conflict. The PA Government under her leadership drew up a draft Constitution on federal lines and presented it before parliament for adoption in 2000, but the attempt was thwarted when the opposition UNP refused to support and sabotaged the effort with the active collaboration of the very forces with which Rajapakse is now seeking forge alliances with the view to getting support for his presidential candidacy.

The adoption of the federal paradigm by the SLFP/PA also enabled a gradual change in the policy of the other major political party, the UNP which in recent years has adopted a similar policy contributing to the emergence, despite intense rivalry for governmental power, of a broad consensus on the ethnic issue between the two major parties. Today the UNP's presidential candidate, Ranil Wickremasinghe, has committed himself to stand by the Oslo Declaration of 5 December 2002 under which the Government and the LTTE agreed to explore a federal solution acceptable to all communities within a 'united Sri Lanka'.

It must also be recognised that the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of August 1987 followed by the enactment of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution "commenced an irreversible process of devolution of power" to Provincial Councils.

There is no doubt that the Rajapakse-JVP pact not only constitutes a repudiation of the SLFP/Peoples Alliance policies adopted and pursued since 1993, but also undermines the salutary broad consensus between the two major parties on a federal solution for Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict when it promises "to protect, defend and preserve the unitary nature of the Sri Lankan State under any solutions to be presented, formed or formulated for the purpose of the resolution of Sri Lanka's national question."

At the 54th Anniversary National Convention of the SLFP held on 7 September, Mr Mahinda Rajapakse was anointed as the SLFP's presidential candidate. Having declined the offer of a lifetime presidency of the SLFP, CBK as the re-elected party leader made perfectly clear her and the party's position on certain vital areas of policy approaches in respect of the Cease-fire Agreement, peace process, PTOMS and devolution of power. She said, "I would like to emphasise that the SLFP as a party stands committed to a negotiated settlement to the ethnic issue. More than half the popu-

lation of the country will support the devolution of power .... There is no other solution but power decentralisation. The masses voted for this again and again..... We must reach any solution through dialogue otherwise there would be none to enjoy the dividends of peace. We must talk to Southern parties, Muslims and Tamils and all stakeholders in seeking a solution."

Paying tribute to Opposition UNP leader Ranil Wickrememsinghe for his effort in signing a Ceasefire Agreement with the LTTE, she said despite many setbacks and political killings, the country had gained economically because of the Ceasefire Agreement. She said her government's 2000 draft constitution for the devolution of power was not fully withdrawn and could yet be the basis for a political solution for the ethnic conflict.

The day after the SLFP Convention, Mr Rajapakse went ahead signing the agreement with the JVP provoking a potential split in the SLFP at the highest level. The old left parties, LSSP and CP, which have been constituent parties of the Peoples Alliance, are said to be gravely disturbed by many of the provisions of the JVP-Rajapakse pact. It is reported that President Kumaratunga told her Prime Minister, "You are undoing and undermining all the hard work we have done over the years to bring the LTTE to the negotiating table. What you are doing is giving them an escape valve where the only winners will be the JVP and the LTTE. With one stroke of the pen you will strengthen the LTTE's hand internationally."

Many will agree that, in addition to the Government and the LTTE, all legitimate stakeholders should have the opportunity of participating in the peace process. Many too will also agree that there are many flaws in the current Ceasefire Agreement, many fault lines in its implementation and too many unacceptable violations including political killings abductions, child conscription etc.

A call for the CFA and its implementation to be reviewed with a view to ending such violations is quite legitimate. To achieve this, the parties to the CFA, the Government and the LTTE, should be persuaded to accept such a review through negotiations. It cannot be achieved by a unilateral exercise by the President or the Government. But the Rajapakse-JVP pact says that the "agreement shall be completely redone on removing and eliminating all the clauses which are prejudicial and harmful to the national security and foster and nurture separatism and are inconsistent with the Constitution of Sri Lanka." The LTTE is unlikely to agree to such a fundamental revision of the CFA, and if any such attempt is made the danger is that the LTTE will pull out of the CFA altogether followed by a full scale war.

Norway, as facilitator, has played a significant role in Sri Lanka's peace process. Some may doubt the correctness of some its actions and make allegations of partiality. But the fact is that Norway came into the scene only because successive Sri Lankan Governments have been unable to bring end to the ethnic conflict for decades. Norway's role in the peace process commenced with an invitation from the Sri Lankan Government and in agreement with the LTTE. Norway's role has the support of the international community, including many of Sri Lanka's donor countries upon which the island depends heavily for its economic and financial assistance. It is one thing to call for other willing and agreeable countries to join the facilitation process, but any attempt to ditch Norway unilaterally is unlikely to be welcomed by the international community.

The JVP-Rajapakse pact also seeks an abrogation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Tigers creating the Post Tsunami Operations Management Structure. Such a joint mechanism was not only requested by the LTTE, but was insisted upon by the donor countries which pledged over a two billion dollar package of aid for post tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction. Abrogating or abandoning the joint mechanism agreed after months of negotiations could easily be cited as another example of perfidy or betrayal.

In a recent interview, Mr Rajapakse is reported to have said, "Who in his proper senses wants war? My fervent hope is that this beautiful country will be without violence for millennia to come. I am a father myself and I love my children and those of others. So does every other parent anywhere else in the world, I know. We must ensure that their future will be secure and free from violence. I will never put the lives of our children in jeopardy. They must all live in peace and enjoy their lives."

No one who knows Mr Rajapakse personally will doubt the sincerity of the sentiments reflected in these words. However, what is certain is that if he became President and sought to deliver on the conditions set by the JVP, a collapse of even what is left of the peace process would be inevitable and the resumption of full scale war would become a dangerous probability.

The pact is said to be one between Mr Rajapakse and the JVP and not one between the JVP and the SLFP/PA. He has been nominated as the SLFP/PA candidate by these parties and they are yet to meet and draw up the manifesto for the presidential election. It could very well be that the manifesto that is eventually agreed will be contrary to the provisions of the JVP-Rajapakse pact producing a politically embarrassing situation for the Prime Minister who will no doubt be asked as to which of the documents the people have to judge him and as to where he stands on the critical issues of war and peace in Sri Lanka.

What the Prime Minister has effectively done by surrendering to the terms set by the JVP is to alienate himself from the leader of his party, a substantial section of the SLFP and PA, other progressive forces and practically all the minority communities, religious and ethnic.

The tragedy for Mr Rajapakse is that he finds himself in a deep political hole dug by the JVP from which he will find it extremely hard to redeem himself completely. But he can make an attempt at partial redemption of his credibility by tearing up his pact with the JVP and go before the people with a manifesto drawn up by his party which has nominated him as its candidate in the presidential election. ❑

Dispute over venue stall talks on CFA

Sept 9 - Proposed talks to save an increasingly fragile cease-fire between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tigers continue to remain stalled. The dispute over the venue for the talks remains unresolved with the LTTE's rejection of the Norwegian decision to select the Colombo International Airport as a suitable location.

The government and Tamil Tigers agreed to review a 2002 Norwegian-brokered cease-fire after the Aug. 12 assassination of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar but have so far been unable to agree on a venue.

The government had insisted that the talks be held within Sri Lanka. It believed the meeting could be held either in Colombo or Omanthai or Muhamalai between the forward defence lines of army and the LTTE, but the Tigers had suggested they be held in Oslo or in their stronghold of Kilimochchi in northern Sri Lanka.

As a compromise the Norwegians decided that Colombo International Airport would be suitable location for the talks. It would seem that it was the Norwegian Government which "determined" the Colombo airport premises as the venue leaving no option for the Sri Lankan Government or the LTTE

A statement issued by the Norwegian Government confirmed that the talks would take place at the Colombo airport premises, but did not say when they would begin. The statement said, "The Royal Norwegian government has determined that the only possible venue is the Colombo international airport," adding that, "This venue is in Sri Lanka and hence should be acceptable to the government of Sri Lanka ... Any travel out of the country by the LTTE would have involved several hours of transit at the Colombo international airport. Hence we draw the conclusion that this venue should also be acceptable to the LTTE."

The statement also said that Jan Petersen, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, had called an extraordinary meeting of the Sri Lanka co-chairs (USA, European Union, Japan and Norway) in New York on 19 September. The meeting will address the increasingly difficult security situation in Sri Lanka and the need to strengthen respect for the Ceasefire Agreement.

The Norwegian statement issued on 7 September said:

"The Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) as well as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has, in written communication to the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG), expressed their strong commitment to hold a meeting to consider practical ways of improving the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement, which has been seriously undermined by violence over recent months and by current developments.

As facilitator, the Royal Norwegian Government has held consultations with both parties regarding the venue for such a meeting. Throughout these consultations, the Government of Sri Lanka has maintained that it wants the meeting to be held in Sri Lanka, while the LTTE has repeated its preference for Kilinochchi or a venue outside Sri Lanka. On this background, the Royal Norwegian Government has determined that the only possible venue is the Colombo International Airport. This venue is in Sri Lanka, and hence should be acceptable to the Government of Sri Lanka. Any travel out of the country by the LTTE would have involved several hours of transit at the Colombo Inter-national Airport. Hence we draw the conclusion that this venue also sho-uld be acceptable to the LTTE. The Royal Norwegian Government will shortly call a meeting of the parties at the Colombo International Airport.

Jan Petersen, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, has called an extraordinary meeting of the Sri Lanka co-chairs (USA, European Union, Japan and Norway) in New York on 19 September. The meeting will address the increasingly difficult security situation in Sri Lanka and the need to strengthen respect for the Ceasefire Agreement."

The Government promptly agreed but the LTTE flatly rejected Norway's decision. President Chandrika Kumaratunga's office said in a statement that it would accept the Norwegian proposal. "The Norwegian facilitator has in a statement issued today (Wednesday, 7 Aug) proposed to hold such talks at an agreed venue in Colombo. The government of Sri Lanka has informed the Royal Norwegian Government that it is agreeable to holding talks at the proposed venue," said the statement.

The LTTE said in a statement that they turned down the venue as they did not think it was suitable for conducting "serious political discussions".

The statement said the LTTE's political wing chief S P Thamilselvan had informed a Norwegian diplomat and members of the Scandinavian truce monitoring team that they were unable to agree to the proposal. "Norway's suggestion to have the proposed discussions between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE at the airport was ruled out by Mr Thamilselvan as totally unacceptable," a statement from the LTTE said on 8 August.

"Katunayake international airport cannot be a venue for meaningful political discussions and the argument that it is secure for LTTE as a transit point to a location outside Sri Lanka, does not hold good when what is contemplated is a serious political discussion involving decisions at the top to trickle down to the armed forces for proper implementation of the CFA," the statement said.

S. P. Thamilselvan was quoted in the TamilNet website as saying: "Direct talks need to be held in a free and fair environment, not in the domain of a single party exercising hegemony over the other."

"Parties to the ceasefire agreement have not been meeting for quite some time ... resulting in frustration and a political vacuum which necessitates a common venue equally comfortable for both the parties," he added.

Norway deeply concerned

In the meantime, Norway said it would send a special envoy to Sri Lanka to help save a troubled ceasefire after admitting it had failed to se-

cure agreement about a venue for planned talks. The Norwegian government in a statement said it was "deeply concerned" by the continuing violence in the island-nation despite a truce that has been in place since February 2002.

The statement also said the former head of the Scandinavian truce monitoring committee in Sri Lanka, retired Norwegian army general Trond Furuhovde, will be sent back to the island within a month for talks with both sides.

The statement from Norway on Aug 9 said, "The Royal Norwegian Government is deeply concerned by the continuing violence in Sri Lanka over the past months, which undermines the Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"As facilitator, the Royal Norwegian Government has sought for the past three weeks to convene a meeting between the parties, at their request, to discuss implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. We regret to conclude that the parties have not reached agreement on the venue for such a meeting at this juncture.

"While the parties have not been able to agree on the venue for a meeting, Major General (ret'd) Trond Furuhovde, former head of mission of Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, will visit Sri Lanka within the next month as special representative of the Royal Norwegian Government. Furuhovde will consult with both parties on the security situation and the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement."

Meanwhile, Oslo has called an extraordinary meeting of the Sri Lanka co-chairs – USA, EU (European Commission and UK EU Presidency), Japan and Norway in New York on 19 September. "The meeting will address the increasingly difficult security situation in Sri Lanka and the need to strengthen respect for the ceasefire agreement," the Norwegian embassy said in a statement.

Worsening situation

The ceasefire signed in February 2002 between the parties has been under severe strain in recent months with a number of violations involving political killings and attacks on security service personnel reaching almost breaking point with the assassination of the island's Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar for which the LTTE has been held responsible by the Government.

Violence has increased sharply in recent months in the northeast, threatening the already shaky ceasefire. The Tamil Tigers agreed to talks to try to salvage the truce after the government blamed them for the Aug. 12 assassination of Sri Lanka's foreign minister, which pushed tensions near to the breaking point.

Violent incidents and provocative actions almost on a daily basis in recent weeks have heightened tensions in the north and east of the island threatening a breakdown of the ceasefire which has become increasingly strained and tenuous. Particularly after the killing last month of the Jaffna Superintendent of Police, Charlie Wijewardene and the assassination of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, the situation has been turning worse by the day.

On August 17, police, backed by the military surrounded the village of Kalati on the outskirts of Jaffna town and arrested a senior LTTE official, K. Gopi, over the killing of a police superintendent. The arrest of Gopi was accompanied by an exchange of fire in the course of which two police officers were injured.

Since the ceasefire was signed in February 2002, this was the first time that a senior LTTE official was taken into custody. Despite the LTTE's protests of Gopi's innocence and that the detention violated the ceasefire, the police refused to release Gopi and flew him to Colombo for interrogation.

In the east of the country, particularly in the Batticaloa and Ampara districts, incidents of shootings and grenade attacks continued on a daily basis. On an average each day two to three persons have been and are being killed or severely injured in these attacks. Victims have included LTTE cadres, Karuna loyalists and security service personnel. Armed clashes have intensified between the LTTE and a breakaway LTTE faction headed by Karuna. While the Tamil Tigers charged that the military was conducting a "shadow war" against them using renegade Karuna loyalists, military spokesmen blamed the Tamil Tigers for engaging in "provocative actions". For the first time since the ceasefire was signed, the military has recommenced cordon-and-search operations in several parts of the Northeast..

Even President Chandrika Kumaratunga, recognising the worsening situation said in a statement issued by her office, "The president is perturbed by the frequency of these provocative incidents during the past several weeks. These incidents seem to be deliberately contrived by extremist elements to invite reprisals leading to the escalation of the conflict situation prevailing in the North and East." It is said that it is this deteriorating security situation in the Northeast that prompted her to ask the Norwegian facilitators to set up a meeting between the Government and LTTE to discuss and review the practical implementation of the ceasefire. And the initial impetus for proposed meeting is petering out in the context of the campaign that has commenced for the Presidential election to be held in November this year.

SLMC urges Oslo

Meanwhile, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress said that Oslo needed to seriously re-examine its role as facilitator and distance itself from the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission to regain the confidence of all the parties involved in the peace process.

SLMC leader Rauff Hakeem, while stressing he did not see a need to remove Norway as peace facilitator, told the press that he believed Oslo should resist from being "nose driven" by the signatories to the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA). "There has been a serious breakdown of confidence with Norway because of its biased attitude, so we feel it needs to seriously re-examine its strategy and implement a better process," Mr. Hakeem said.

"The SLMC will be lobbying for the SLMM to operate as a separate entity in the peace process and not under the Norwegian facilitators otherwise the actions of both will always have a question mark," Mr. Hakeem said. "Completely removing Oslo from the peace process may not be ideal at this time so it should be carefully studied before being implemented, if that idea is being considered," he said. ❑

NEWS REVIEW

Monitors for Presidential Poll

THE independent election monitoring body, PAFFREL will deploy 23,500 local and 125 international monitors in the forthcoming Presidential Election, PAFFREL national coordinator Thusitha Aluthpatabendige.

The Elections Secretariat said that they were yet to approve official monitors for the Presidential Election, expected to be held in the second week of November. They have not yet finalised arrangements for bringing down official international monitors.

He said they plan to give more emphasis to the crisis-ridden North and East, where a lot of election violence was recorded in the past. The PAFFREL plans to meet LTTE political wing leader Pulidevan to discuss monitoring aspects in the uncleared areas.

"If cluster stations are set up in Government controlled areas, there would not be any need for our monitors to enter uncleared areas," he said.

The independent monitoring body will deploy 22,000 stationary observers, around two per each polling station to monitor the voting process and 1500 mobile monitors throughout the island to report any violence on the election day.

Aluthpatabendige said they were inviting 100 international monitors for duty on election day, out of which the majority will be posted to North-East parts. An additional 25 monitors will arrive early for the pre-election monitoring work which they hope to start immediately after the nominations.

The international monitors will be brought down from India, Pakistan, Netherlands and Bangladesh etc.

PAFFREL has planned to monitor the Presidential Poll in three stages covering the pre-election period, the elections day and the post-election period.

A network of offices, one in each district will be set up to coordinate the monitoring work and they will be assisted by 160 divisional officers. "They will start operations immediately after the Elections Commissioner's notice calling for nominations."

Elections Act requires the nominations date to be set within 16 to 21 days after the gazette notification by the Elections Commissioner.

CBK declines 'life presidency'

Sept 7 - More than 20,000 participated in the 54th Annual conference of Sri Lanka Freedom party (SLFP) which was held Tuesday at Colombo Horse Race Square, political sources in Colombo said. The conference rally started at 12 noon from Colombo Campell Park and marched through the baseline road, via Reed Avenue and reached the meeting venue at 6pm. Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumarathunga and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksha joined the rally at Reed Avenue and walked to Horse Race Square, political sources in Colombo said.

The participants carried blue flags, the picture of Mr Rajapaksha, and shouted slogans carrying the message "Sri Lanka's next president will be Mahinda."

The General meeting continued till 9 pm. Ms Kumaratunge, Mr Rajapaksa, Ministers Anura Bandaranayaka, Mangala Samaraweera, Mithripala Srisena, SLFP Regional Organisers and Senior SLFP members spoke. Mr Bandaranayake officially announced Mr Mahinda Rajapakse as the SLFP presidential Candidate.

Even though President Chandrika Kumaratunga had her presidential term cut down by one year by the recent order the Supreme Court, she had the opportunity of being the "life president" of her party. But she has turned down a unanimous decision by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) to make her its life president.

In terms of the Constitution, Mrs. Kumaratunga will cease to hold any public office following the forthcoming presidential election to be held in November this year.

It is learnt that in recognition of the "valuable service" she had rendered to the party and the country, the SLFP's Central Committee and the All Island Working Committee on Sunday (4) unanimously decided to amend Section 5(1) of the Party Constitution to enable President Kumaratunga to function as life president of the party.

Kumaratunga describing this move as being without precedent, had said that the concept of life presidency was not consistent with democratic principles. Saying that she would hold the post of party president only as long as the membership elected her for the post, she said that she was of the firm view that the membership should have the right and freedom either to elect or vote out the president of the party at any time of their choosing.

Foreign Minister's Murder Inquiry

Sept 5 - Police investigating the assassination of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar claim that they have unearthed vital evidence to suggest that the Tamil Tigers were involved in the Minister's murder, despite claims by the LTTE that they were not involved in the assassination.

The police claim that the evidence they have in their possession and the information revealed by two suspects presently in custody point to a definite LTTE connection in the assassination.

According to a report in the Sunday Times (4 September), the two men held by the police investigating the assassination of the Foreign Minister have confessed that they met Charles, whom they described as the Intelligence Chief in charge of the LTTE's operations in the 'south' of the island, during a visit to the Tiger stronghold of Kilinochchi, and that they were threatened with bodily harm if they did not comply with their instructions.

There are two men currently in police custody in connection with the investigation. The first one, Muttiah Sahadevan alias Devan had worked as gardener in the residence of Lakshman Thalayasingham, a neighbour of the slain Minister, from whose house the fatal shots were fired on the night of August 12. Isidor Arokya Nathar alias Babu is the second suspect. Both are from Bandarawela.

According to investigators, Devan has said that Babu whom he knew had come to see him as far back as February 2004 (when Mr. Kadirgamar was not holding office) and introduced him to a person called Vinothan at the Viharamahadevi Park. Vinothan had been with two girls at the park. Devan was told that Vinothan and the two girls were from the LTTE, and had wanted his help.

They had told him that he would face drastic consequences if he did not help them. Babu is said to have urged Devan to go with him to Kilinochchi in May 2005 where they met Vinothan and Charles. Devan has told the investigators that he agreed to help the LTTE.

Thereafter, the Minister's private residence at Bullers Lane in Colombo 7 had been videoed, and a duplicate key to the rear door of Mr. Thalayasingham's residence cut. He had also helped in getting some pipes taken into the Thalayasingham residence. These were later used as the tripod for the sniper who shot the Minister.

Two men had been introduced to Devan a month before the shooting, but the gardener had said that he did not know their identities. He has told Police that these men entered the Thalayasingham residence on the night of August 10 with his assistance.

Mr. Kadirgamar was shot around 10.55 on the night of August 12 as he emerged after his regular swim in the swimming pool of his private residence. He was pronounced dead an hour later after emergency surgery.

Muslim Alliance sets conditions for support

THE Muslim National Alliance (MNA) comprising seven political parties met with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse and the United National Party in formal discussions with regard to stance it would take in the forthcoming Presidential Election.

The MNA proposed that the Muslim community should be recognised as a separate ethnic group and devolution of power to settle the ethnic conflict based on federalism and to incorporate the right of internal self-determination of the Muslims.

The MNA also called for the immediate implementation of the constitution to conduct a referendum to allow the people to decide on the North-East merger. They also wanted the candidates to declare the east as a Muslim Majority Province and to provide for adequate devolution of power to that province.

Other stipulations included the revision of the CFA and the MoU between the Government and the LTTE to provide for the participation of the Muslims as an independent and equal stakeholder.

Provincial Council elections to be held in the North and the East. Local Government Elections in the predominant Muslim areas in the North and East.

No change in strategic aim

If anyone had any illusion that the LTTE has come down from its position on Tamil sovereignty, self-determination and autonomy, they were off target. That is according to Mr. K. V. Balakumaran, a senior LTTE member and former EROS leader.

According to report (Sep 2) in the TamilNet, when asked for his comment on the recent characterization in the Colombo press of LTTE "climbing down" on previously stated positions on issues, Balakumaran's response was, "Liberation Tigers' recent responses to emerging political issues are tactical, reflecting the organization's political maturity and the need to further expose to the international community the Government of Sri Lanka's inability to effectively address the Tamil National question."

"The Liberation Tigers, for example, do not see the agreement on principle to hold talks aimed at strengthening the implementation of the MoU as a blemish on its self-respect or dignity. The LTTE leadership will continue to take tactical decisions that will help advance the political gains the movement has made in recent years," he further said.

"Our leadership is patiently working towards further strengthening the International Community's belief that the Southern polity is not capable of, and the southern political dynamics is only getting worse in, resolving Tamil question equitably in a peaceful manner," Balakumaran said. "However, the strategic mission of achieving our rights to self-determination within the parameters articulated by our leadership will always remain on target,"

"We believe that this approach has paid rich dividends for us thus far. Those who interpret such LTTE's responses as a sign of weakness can do so at their own peril," said Balakumaran.

Kadirgamar, a 'marked man'

According to former Ontario premier Bob Rae, the late Lankan foreign minister Lakshman Kadirgamar was fully aware that he was a marked man and he could be shot and killed at any time, may be even in his swimming pool, and that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) never hesitated to call him a traitor to their cause.

In an article in the Globe and Mail, one of Canada's leading newspapers, Bob Rae wrote about Lakshman Kadirgamar under the caption 'I Remember.'

He revealed, "He talked often of his possible assassination." "I could be shot dead in my swimming pool," he once said. He remembered Lakshman Kadirgamar as a leading Tamil lawyer and an Oxford graduate, and "he knew that he was a marked man, and that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) never hesitated to call him a traitor to their cause."

In his article the former Ontario premier recalled, "I met Lakshman Kadirgamar on each of my many trips to Sri Lanka since the ceasefire of 2002." He added, "Well-dressed, fit, and vigorous for his 73 years, he was a tough political partisan. He certainly had no time for his political opponents, who were many."

According to Bob Rae, "Kadirgamar wanted peace, but not at any cost. He could not accept that the LTTE had a lock on representing the Tamil community. "He was

Web: www.carltonleisure.com Email: info@carltonleisure.com
SRILANKAN'S NO1 PREFERRED TRAVEL AGENT
CARLTON LEISURE
Worldwide Travel & Tours
"Fly with us once, Fly with us always"
IATA

SRILANKAN AIRLINES
COLOMBO
fr £410+Taxes
1st Aug to 18th Sep
On selected flights only

MADRAS, COCHIN, BANGALORE, TRIVANDRUM
fr £325+Taxes

HONG KONG, BANGKOK, SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr £360+Taxes

QATAR AIRWAYS
COLOMBO
fr £360+Taxes
valid until 18 Sep

COCHIN, TRIVANDRUM HYDERABAD
fr £385+Taxes

SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr £390+Taxes

DUBAI
fr £215+Taxes

Call Us for Srilankan Airlines Special family Fare to COLOMBO & INDIA

LOW FARES TO EUROPE

BILLUND	fr £29+Taxes
PARIS	fr £39+Taxes
COPENHAGEN	fr £39+Taxes
OSLO	fr £39+Taxes
ZURICH	fr £59+Taxes
GENEVA	fr £49+Taxes
AMSTERDAM	fr £19+Taxes
TORONTO	fr £299+Taxes

Tour Packages - SPECIAL OFFER
EXOTIC KERALA - 05 Nights/ 06 Days £699 + taxes
SRI LANKA - 06 Nights/ 07 Days £559 + taxes
INDIA - BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE 08 Days
GOLDEN TRINGLE 09 Days

Tailor - made Tour Packages: 020 8429 2797 / 020 8426 1266 tours@carltonleisure.com
FLIGHTS HOTLINE 0870 224 9222 FOR EMERGENCY TRAVEL 07957 450 895 or 07966 865171

HARROW & WEMBLEY
299 RAYNERS LANE, HARROW
MIDDX, HA5 5EG
020 8426 1266

CENTRAL LONDON
68 GREAT PORTLAND STREET
LONDON, W1W 7NG
020 7636 7636

EAST LONDON & ESSEX
212A, HIGH STREET NORTH
EASTHAM, LONDON, E6 2JA
020 8586 7675

SOUTH LONDON
233 MITCHAM ROAD
TOOTING, LONDON SW17 9JG
020 8672 5757

prepared to accept a federal Sri Lanka, but not," as he put it, 'a fascist, racist state in the heart of our country.' "

Did SLMM meet with Karuna Group?

Sept 7 - The Eastern LTTE leader Karuna's group, on their web-site claimed that members of the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM) met with senior leaders of their group last week. According to the web-site (www.athirady.com), the meeting took place deep in the jungle areas near Vaharai, in the eastern Batticalo district. Three senior military commanders of the Tamil National Force met with the SLMM and discussed the recent events in the east, according to the published reports on the web-site. The report went on say that both sides agreed to have further meetings in the area. According to political observers if such a meeting took place, it would be the first sign that the SLMM has offered any form of recognition to the Karuna faction.

When Karuna broke away from the main-LTTE, he requested that his group has to be treated separately. SLMM at the time rejected the suggestion. The LTTE faction headed by Mr.Pirabakaran also demanded that the government and the Norwegian peace monitors that the Karuna faction of the LTTE should not be given any sort of recognition.

However, the SLMM dismissed claims that there had been a formal meeting between Scandinavian truce monitors and senior representatives of the renegade LTTE faction led by former Batticaloa Commander Karuna in the Batticaloa District. There had been no meetings either in Batticaloa or any other part of the northern and eastern provinces, SLMM spokesperson Ms. Helen Olafsdottir said.

But she acknowledged that truce monitors patrolling areas dominated by Karuna cadres had met some renegade cadres. There had been a few meetings but nothing during the past two weeks. The SLMM spokesperson emphasised that accidental meetings should not be considered as 'contacts' between the monitoring mission and the rebel faction. According to the spokesperson the one chance meeting had taken place on May 29. A website run by Karuna recently posted a picture taken at the May 29 meeting fuelling speculation that the two sides were in regular contact.

More Indian role urged

New Delhi, Sept 2 - General Satish Nambiar a former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, Force Commander and Head of Mission of the UN forces in former Yugoslavia and formerly a advisor to the Government of Sri Lanka on certain aspects of the peace process says that India needs to get involved in the Sri Lankan process now because India is also responsible for what has happened in Sri Lanka.

"I cannot speak for the Indian establishment. But, I

have always been of the view that India needs to play a more active role in this process. After all we have common interests, affiliations and we are neighbours. I will also be the first to admit that we owe a responsibility to the people of Sri Lanka because in part we were also responsible for what had happened in Sri Lanka," he told the "The Island" (Colombo).

General Nambiar who visited Sri Lanka several times to study the issue of High Security Zones described late Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar who was assassinated by the LTTE as one of Sri Lanka's most distinguished leaders and a man with principles. Nambiar said, "His loss is certainly the LTTE's gain. The government of Sri Lanka will now have to look for a person who can articulate his views."

Satish Nambiar said it was time for the international community to put pressure on the LTTE after the assassination of Mr. Kadirgamar. "I also feel the LTTE couldn't care less about the international community," said the top Indian Military expert. General Nambiar who looked at the High Security Zones in Sri Lanka agreed that the LTTE also have several high security zones. He said he LTTE had not allowed access even to the monitors (SLMM), to many places they control and the LTTE feel the monitors must not go. "It is not a good state of affairs. They must have access to all those places." said Nambiar.

Jaffna lecturer on child-rape charge

Police have arrested K T Ganeshalingam Jaffna lecturer in the faculty of arts at the University of Jaffna, for raping a 13-year-old girl domestic servant in his residence, a report from Jaffna said.

The girl child was admitted to the Jaffna hospital when she attempted to commit suicide by poisoning herself. At the hospital she confessed to the medical staff about the sexual assaults on her. According to hospital sources, the suspect is alleged to have assaulted the child more than 40 times over a period of six months, and when it became unbearable the child had tried to kill herself. The suspect was produced before the Jaffna magistrate who ordered the suspect to be remanded in custody after refusing an application to be freed on bail was made on his behalf.

The suspect who is reportedly a spokesman for the 'International Students Organisation of Thamil Eelam' is reportedly an active participant in University and local politics including organising 'Pongu Thamil' events.

All assassination suspects freed

Sept 2 - Sri Lankan police investigators have closed probes into the assassinations of former President Ranasinghe Premadasa, and the former UNP leader Gamini Dissanayake, media reports from Colombo said.

Ranasinghe Premadasa was assassinated on May Day, 1993 when he was leading a rally. Twenty-one others also died in the blast. and Gamini Dissanayake in October 1994 at an election rally by suspected LTTE suicide bombers.

Colombo Magistrate Court freed 21 men who were accused of involvement in the assassination of Premadasa, the Attorney General's department said. The 20 Tamils and a Sinhalese man who were accused of complicity in the assassination of Premadasa were discharged by the Magistrate and the case was closed, a department official said. The suspects had been freed on bail for a long period of time and only eight of them turned up in court for the hearing and the rest could not be informed "as they lived in LTTE-controlled areas in Kilinochchi, Sunday Times reported.

While the Premadasa assassination probe was dropped as the investigators told the court that "there was no evidence to indict any of the suspects," the Gamini Dissanayake case was "abandoned" as the "files had been lost," and "no suspects were taken to custody," the newspaper said.

Teenage prostitution

It has been reported that girls even as young as in their early teens are being lured into prostitution under the pretext of them being found employment in foreign countries. While this practice has been going on for years, it has begun to worry Sri Lankan authorities because of its widespread nature in the recent past.

On receiving information that young girls from remote villages were being kept at a lodge in Maradana and introduced to prostitution before being sent abroad for employment, accompanied by police, the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children, Young persons and Women raided a lodge and took into custody a girl and a suspect. They were produced before the Maligakanda Magistrate, Priyantha de Silva on Wednesday (31) and remanded till September 13.

The passport bearing No. 41714 of the minor, with her age altered from 16 to 23 years was taken into custody by the Criminal Investigations Department.

OIC Udaya informed the Court that the minor from Navasenpura Polonnaruwa was entrusted to the suspect Rikas Rifai from Maharagama by the mother and an uncle named Noorlebbe. The minor was later found accommodation by the suspect at Ansar Lodge in Mohideen Masjid Road Maradana.

Investigations by the police further had further revealed that the suspect had given Rs.10,000 to the minor's mother . The suspect in a statement had revealed that Rs.14,000 was charged to make a false passport. The suspect had also told the authorities that there was a great demand for minor females as domestics abroad.

A spokesman for the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children, Young persons and Women said that the temptation and potential for the abuse of these young girls during the period they languish in lodges from the time they are handed over by their poor parents and the time they are found employment abroad cannot be underestimated. ❑

Mahinda-JVP pact and reactions

The agreement between the People's Liberation Front (JVP) and the SLFP presidential candidate, Mahinda Rajapakse, was signed on 8 August at the official residence of the Prime Minister, Temple Trees.

The main conditions put forward by the JVP and agreed by Mr Rajapakse include: non-implementation of the P-TOMS, a commitment to a unitary state, revision of the February 2002 Cease Fire Agreement between the Government and the LTTE and a review the Norwegian role in the peace process.

The Agreement was signed with the blessings of many religious heads, Ministers and other invited guests. The ceremony began with the commemoration of the heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country. Traditional oil lamps were lit by the presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse, the leader of JVP, Somawansa Amerasinghe, Anura Bandaranaike, Susil Premajayantha, Mangala Samaraweera, Wimal Weerawansa, and Nandana Gunatillake. President Chandrika Kumaratunga was not present.

The ceremony began with a commemoration of the heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country. Traditional oil lamps were lit by the presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse, the leader of JVP, Somawansa Amerasinghe including Messrs Anura Bandaranaike, Susil Premajayantha, Mangala Samaraweera, Wimal Weerawansa, and Nandana Gunatillake. The leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, Douglas Devananda, and the leader of the National Unity Alliance, Ferial Ashraff, also attended the ceremony.

The notable absentees at the event were Ministers Maithripala Sirisena, D. M. Jayaratne, Sarath Amunugama, D.E.W. Gunasekera and Tissa Vitharana.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse said that he signed this historic agreement in good faith for the peace, development and a disciplined society of the country consisting of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burger and Malay and not for personal gain.

He said that some are making allegations on signing this agreement and he wished to reiterate that there had been similar agreements in 1956 between S W R D Bandaranaike and Philip Gunawardene, in 1970 between Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike and Dr N M Perera and in 2004 between the SLFP and the JVP where the same elements made similar statements which are not new to us. He said: "We need peace in this country, not only in the South, but also in the North and East. It is a pity that some make allegations that we are going to bring the war" he added.

Somawansa Amerasinghe, leader of the JVP, said that separatism and terrorism has to be defeated. Referring to media reports in Sri Lanka about a possible return to war as a result of the alliance, Mr. Amarasinghe said: "Some people say we want war. We don't like war, but we are not afraid of war. You cannot bring peace by being afraid." He emphasized that Mahinda Rajapkse was a man of his word and did what he said.. He was confident that Rajapkse would be the next President who would serve all communities alike and bring peace, harmony and prosperity in the country

The religious heads stressed the importance of a lasting settlement to the crisis faced by the country protecting the sovereignty. They gave their blessings to the presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse to achieve this objective.

Mahinda Rajapakse in an apparent move to consolidate his alliance with the JVP has chosen the UPFA's betel leaf symbol in preference to the party's hand symbol. Some senior SLFPers are said to be unhappy that the hand symbol has once again disappeared. It was at the 1988 general elections and the 1989 presidential elections when Sirimavo Bandaranaike led the SLFP that the hand symbol was last used.

Chandrika-Mahinda row over JVP deal

A dispute between the President Chandrika Kumaratunge and the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse over the agreement the Prime Minister had signed with the JVP has erupted into the open with commentators saying the dispute may inflict serious damage in the Rajapakse's campaign to become President.

It is learnt that President Kumaratunga in her capacity as the leader of the SLFP has sent a letter to Mr Rajapakse making the charge that he had breached party discipline in having signed an agreement with the JVP, the contents of which did not agree with the SLFP's long accepted policies.

In her letter sent on Thursday, August 8, President Kumaratunga had said that the Mr Rajapakse had "unilaterally decided to reject the tsunami aid-sharing structure," which had been "approved by our party, the Cabinet – including yourself - and presented to Parliament by you."

Expressing her dismay over the change of his mind within just a "couple of months". the President is reported have accused the Prime Minister of breaching party discipline: "I inform you that your actions totally breach party discipline by your unilateral action." She also has accused him of not informing her or the party's central committee about signing the agreement and not keeping an earlier promise to amend sections of the agreement. "While you sent invitations to others, and telephoned them to invite for the signing. You deliberately avoided informing me," her letter said.

On the issue of the "unitary state" to which the Mr Rajapakse has bound himself under his agreement with the JVP, the President in her let-

Rajapakse and JVP Agreement

The following is the text of the 'Policy-agreement' entered between the presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse, the Prime-Minister and the Peoples' Liberation Front (JVP) for the presidential poll 2005:

1. It is hereby declared that the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure which was signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tamil Tiger Eelam (herein after referred to as LTTE) on the 24th June 2005 the implementation of which has been already stayed by the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and also was subject to much public criticism shall not reactivate, enforce or implement in whatsoever manner and for the purpose of accelerating, expediting and regularizing the provision of the necessary relief services to all the people affected by Tsunami, a new program shall be formulated as a priority task on reviewing the existing program and to activate it forthwith through the assistance and intervention of the government.

2. We believe that it is necessary to have negotiations not only with the LTTE but also with all other relevant parties to resolve Sri Lanka's national question and that without being agreed on such lasting solution it is agreed hereby not to grant Interim Self-governing Authority or any such political or administrative structure to LTTE or to hold negotiations with LTTE on that basis.

3. It is hereby agreed to protect, defend and preserve the unitary nature of the Sri Lankan State under any solutions to be presented, formed or formulated for the purpose of the resolution of Sri Lanka's national question.

4. It is agreed hereby that in considering the harmful and prejudicial effects and other serious implications of the Ceasefire Agreement that was entered and signed by the then Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe and LTTE on 22nd February 2002, the said agreement shall be reviewed and revised fully and the said agreement shall be completely redone on removing and eliminating all the clauses which are prejudicial and harmful to the national security and foster and nurture separatism and are inconsistent with the Constitution of Sri Lanka.

5. As it is axiomatic that Norway has shown unprecedented bias and partiality towards the LTTE in her role as a facilitator in the negotiation process between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE and in the monitoring mission of the Ceasefire Agreement and also as she has undoubtedly failed to act impartially in performing her obligations, it is agreed hereby to re consider seriously whether the Norway should be allowed to engage in those activities further and the necessary actions shall be taken accordingly.

6. It is agreed hereby that the re-establishment and restoration of human rights, democracy and law and order which have become completely non-existing phenomena due to the terrorist activities of the LTTE in the North and Eastern provinces shall be considered as a prioritized task and also all the necessary and appropriate actions shall be taken to ensure to all democratic political parties to carry out their political activities without any impediments, to create an atmosphere for the Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim peoples to live without any fears and perplexity and also to ensure that multi-party political system shall be restored in the said provinces.

7. The Executive Presidential System being most destructive and harmful to the democracy of Sri Lanka and having accepted its abolition as an essential priority task, it is hereby agreed to terminate the Executive Presidential System before the end of the tenure of office of the 6th Executive President which is to be commenced from the year 2005.

8. No party shall accept the so-called liberal open economic policy as Sri Lanka's national economic strategy nevertheless both parties shall agree that an economic policy aimed at strengthening and promoting national economy with equilibrium shall be adopted.

9. The harbors, seaports, airports, State commercial banks, the Petroleum Corporation, Ceylon Electricity Board and all other Government establishments and including water and mineral resources which are the nerve centers of the national economy shall not be privatized and also shall agree to abolish any such actions whatsoever taken so far towards privatization of the aforesaid institutions, services and resources.

10. The right to have free education shall be ensured and also any moves towards the privatization of education sector including the "White Paper" presented by the United National Party in 1981 shall be abolished after comprehensive review and carefully considering the views of intellectuals, academics, teachers and students.

11. In resolving the problems faced by workers who contribute to the national production process, and the farmers, factory owners, entrepreneurs, business community and consumers who face hardships in view of soaring inflation, the proposals of the People's Liberation Front (JVP) shall be accepted and shall agree to act in conformity with that proposals.

12. Sri Lanka shall adopt non-aligned foreign policy and in particular shall be taken into account the regional and the Asian cooperation in revisiting the foreign policy.

ter pointed out, "Our party has long held that peace can be achieved only by devolving power within a united country." Saying "Your agreement talks about devolving power within a unitary state, which is impossible. It has never been done anywhere else in the world," President Kumaratunga asked Mr Rajapakse, "Please inform me and the people of this country, how you plan to do anything for peace under this agreement".

Mahinda's pacts pushing to war: LTTE

The LTTE has warned that the SLFP presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse's decision to agree to the conditions of the JVP and the JHU in relation to the P-TOMS deal and the peace process, proved once again that the Tamils were being pushed towards gaining their rights on their own.

Participating in an interview over a pro LTTE television channel on Wednesday (7) night, LTTE political wing Chief S. P Thamilselvan said the agreements signed by the JVP and the JHU with Mr. Rajapakse contained clauses that were already in force and as such they did not come as a surprise to the rebel leadership.

"The conditions put forward by

the JVP and the JHU to support the premier at the presidential elections have already been implemented. The state of the P-TOMS, the peace process and the CFA bears testament to this. So the agreement signed between the parties is just a formality and public announcement," Mr. Thamilselvan told the Tamil National Network (TNN).

The LTTE political head said the Tamil people were frustrated at the government's failure to address their urgent humanitarian needs following the war and the tsunami, forcing them to gain their rights on their own. Mr. Thamilselvan stressed the international community should take stock of what was taking place in Sri Lanka and note that the government would never offer an acceptable solution to the Tamil needs.

Meanwhile, TNA parliamentarians are scheduled to meet Mr. Thamilselvan in Kilinochchi in the next few days to decide on their stand at the upcoming presidential elections.

The TNA is likely to make its decision known on September 15, but sources predicted the TNA was likely to support UNP candidate Ranil Wickremesinghe as his policy with regard to the peace process fell in line with the expectations of the LTTE.

Chandrika insists on power-sharing

Sept 6 - President Chandrika Kumaratunga in the last days of her 11-year presidency reiterated her stand on the ethnic issue, warning that the country might be plunged back to war unless there was power-sahring through devolution of power. She also paid handsome tribute to the Opposition Leader and UNP presidential candidate, Ranil Wickremasinghe, for entering into the Ceasefire Agreement.

Addressing the 54th National Convention of the SLFP in Colombo, President Kumaratunga said, "I would like to emphasise that the SLFP as a party stands committed to a negotiated settlement to the ethnic issue. More than half the population of the country will support the devolution of power," she said adding, "Decentralisation is a sine qua non. Otherwise God Sakra will have to come here with a solution," she said

"There is no other solution but power decentralisation. The masses voted for this again and again. Surveys and research have pointed out to us that only decentralisation of power would save the country from division. We must reach any solution through dialogue otherwise there would be none to enjoy the dividends of peace. We must talk to Southern parties, Muslims and Tamils and all stakeholders in seeking a solution."

..She said that the SLFP since 1994 had engaged in a genuine approach to find a solution to the North East crisis that was brought into the Sri Lankan polity by the UNP regime in 1983. "The UNP not only suppressed its Southern political opponents but led the unrest among the Tamil youths to a war. They took to arms because they were repeatedly neglected and used for the UNP's political gain," she said. "When we came to power in 1994, the UNP had no solution; they neither could win the war nor could seek solution through negotiation. We, the SLFP, had a vision that seeks solution through talks. Whenever, the LTTE opted for war, we would hold on and answer successfully but we believed that the final solution must be reached through discussion between all stakeholders," she said.

Expressing views different from her party's presidential candidate and making an emotion-charged speech, the President paid tribute to Opposition UNP

leader Ranil Wickrememsinghe for his effort in signing a ceasefire agreement with the LTTE. The President said despite many setbacks and political killings, the country had gained economically because of the Ceasefire Agreement. She said her government's 2000 draft constitution for the devolution of power was not fully withdrawn and could yet be the basis for a political solution for the ethnic conflict.

A visibly moved President struck a farewell note. "I walk away a free and happy person. I do not have an iota of regret. I can step down with pride unlike some others."

Declines life presidency: Sri Lanka's President Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge has turned down the decision Central Committee and the All Island Executive Committee of the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) to make her life president of the party stating that will tarnish SLFP's image as a dictatorial party, SLFP sources said.

The Central Committee and the All Island Executive Committee decided to make Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge, life president of the SLFP at its 54 annual convention in recognition of services she rendered to the party.

When senior leaders of the party conveyed the decision to her she declined to accept the position. She said the SLFP has been a democratic party from the outset and there has never been a life President of the party at any time of its history.

"I have always believed in democracy. I prefer to accept the post of President or any other post of the party only through a vote by the membership," Ms Kumaratunge is reported to have told the party's senior leaders.

Ranil sees future role for Chandrika

UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe, who aims to be elected President in the forthcoming election, intends to make use of President Chandrika Kumaratunga's expertise after she completes her second term in November this year.

Expressing confidence in winning the forthcoming presidential election, Wickremesinghe declared that he would explore the possibility of working out a procedure similar to the one in the US where the services of former presidents were utilized.

Addressing parliamentary group meeting in Parliament on 8 September, Wickremesinghe said that the UNP reached agreement with the SLFP on the peace process. He emphasized the need to honour the agreement as the continuation of the

peace process would entirely depend on that. He warned that the collapse of the UNP-SLFP understanding would be disastrous. He expressed the belief that their understanding would be pivotal to the ongoing efforts to resolve the ethnic crisis and preventing the division of the country on ethnic lines.

Wickremesinghe said that his party would say what it could implement once it was returned to power. He explained the need to adopt a workable political action plan that could effectively tackle problems in the short, medium and long term.

He reiterated the hotly disputed call to implement a political action plan for about a 15-year period, insisting that such a plan would be pivotal for achieving peace and economic prosperity. This should be the basis for a feasible national plan, he said.

The forthcoming presidential election would give him a mandate to implement a long term plan. He was confident about reaching consensus with other political parties and groups to facilitate the implementation of his action plan once he succeeded President Kumaratunga.

"It was President Chandrika Kumaratunga who first said that a solution acceptable to all should be reached within a united Sri Lanka. Accordingly the UNP government came to an agreement with the LTTE in Oslo in that direction. The UNP prepared a framework for discussions at the Tokyo conference. That framework was also accepted by the President," Mr. Wickremesinghe said.

Wickremesinghe said that safeguarding the existing understanding between the UNP and SLFP would be pivotal for his efforts to re-build the country. He appreciated President Kumaratunga's role in initiating the Oslo-led peace process and the subsequent finalisation of a cease-fire agreement soon after the UNP returned to power at the December 2005 Parliamentary Elections.

Wickremesinghe stressed that both parties should not deviate from the peace process and engage in ac-

Advertisement for Post of Accounts/IT Assistant

A1 Accountancy

A1 Accountancy provides total solution to Personal and corporate clients on Accountancy and Tax matters. We guarantee that we would provide a personal service to satisfy our clients. Our clients come from various ethnic background, but predominantly Sri Lankan.

Accounts / IT Assistant - Reference F & A - IT 010905

Job Description: The candidate must be well organised with good communication skills, and show initiative & willingness to learn. Should possess good administration capabilities. Part of the job is to develop and manage "Database Management System".

Job Responsibilities:

- Data Entry to Sales, Purchases Ledger from the source documents.
- Finalise Quarterly VAT returns
- Managing Cash books & bank reconciliation
- Payroll processing (Weekly/ Monthly), and Y/E returns.
- Reconciliation of supplier statements.

Candidate should possess:

- **Min. one year of similar Accounting experience**
- **Ability to adapt and troubleshoot IT problems**
- **Must have some working knowledge of practical computer H/S**
- **Needs to be comfortable with Windows and MS Office**

Desirable: - Speaking Tamil Language.

Working Hours/ Salary/ Benefits: Working hours - 9 to 5.30 with one hr lunch: 20 days annual holidays. Annual Salary - £11,500 a.a.e

Please send your CV together with a covering letter (No telephone calls or agency please) and an explanation of how you meet the criteria for this position stating your current salary by quoting the above reference number to

A1 Accountancy, 183 Wickham Chase, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0BH

Closing Date: 30th September 2005

tions detrimental to the peace effort.

Stressing the need to further strengthen the cease-fire agreement, Wickremesinghe pointed out that the Supreme Court had recently accepted as valid the Oslo-arranged truce agreement. The UNP leader insisted that the cease-fire agreement should be the basis for future negotiations aimed at achieving permanent peace.

LSSP wants priority to solving ethnic conflict

Mahinda Rajapakse if elected as the President will have to give the highest priority to solving the ethnic conflict, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) said.

In a statement issued to the media, the LSSP called upon Rajapakse to carry forward the policy of President Chandrika Kumaratunga in this regard and continue the work done by her with a view to urgently working out a negotiated political settlement based on a very wide devolution of power while maintaining the ceasefire now in force.

The LSSP called upon all progressive forces in the country to rally round Rajapakse, the common candidate of all progressive parties and ensure his victory at the coming Presidential election.

Rajapakse's victory will signify the defeat of all the treacherous forces beholden to foreign imperialists and their agents, it said.

Preventing the victory of the UNP and Ranil Wickremesinghe will also clearly indicate the rejection once again of the policies, of subservience in the imperialist monetary agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank as clearly shown by the mandate of the people given in the election of August 2004, the party said in a news release.

The LSSP urged all the progressive masses of our country to elect Rajapakse as the President to carry forward a progressive programme that will ensure the strengthening of our national economy, safeguard the welfare measures won by the people such as free education and free medical and hospital services, provision of essential food and other consumer items at a reasonable prices and safeguarding the rights of workers.

Vasu to wait and see

New Socialist Front (NSF) leader Vasudeva Nanayakkara who earlier pledged to support SLFP Presidential candidate Mahinda Rajapakse said he would reconsider his support after discussions with all Left parties, taking into consideration the basis of the agreement signed with the JVP.

Mr. Nanayakkara said he was strongly opposed to the conditions put forward by the JVP and that he was opposed to the signing of the agreement. The party would discuss its future steps and take a common decision at the upcoming Presidential elections. He also said his party decided to support Mr. Rajapakse on five main points which included the changing of the Executive Presidency to make it more democratic.

EPRLF to support Mahinda

T. Sritharan leader of Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF, Padmanabha) says his party would support Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse in the forthcoming Presidential elections.

Sritharan told the press, "Democratic parties cannot operate freely in the North/East now. We lost many people due to the flawed Cease-fire Agreement. The Prime Minister understands democratic values and he is known to be a campaigner for Human Rights. He is also from the grassroots like many of us"

Sritharan who met Premier Rajapakse at Temple Trees to pledge his support. "What we need is devolution of power and democratic space in the North/East. It is our duty to support the Prime Minister who is acceptable by right thinking people of all communities. He is sensitive to the needs of our people" said Sritharan.

When questioned why his group was not supportive of opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe and if his party had any support base in the North/East, the Senior EPRLF leader said "It is because more people and leaders were killed after the CFA including many of our members."

Taking country to war

If Mahinda Rajapakse won the presidential election with help of the JVP and the JHU, the country was definitely bound to be pushed towards a war with massive repercussions, New Left Front leader Dr Wickremebahu Karunaratne said. Speaking at a news conference he said the Prime Minister had now become the common candidate of the JVP and the JHU and posing himself as a communal minded war candidate after riding on the shoulders of SLFP.

He said Mr. Rajapakse was treading a path totally different from what President Chandrika Kumaratunga had walked in the recent past. Dr. Karunaratne said democratic people and the true leftists in the country cannot in any way help Mr. Rajapakse in his march towards war.

"I feel he is digging his own grave", he said. Mr. Karunaratne said according to the conditions laid down by the JVP and the JHU for their support to the SLFP presidential candidate, even an administrative structure to help tsunami victims in the North East cannot be set up. "Prime Minister Rajapakse is not contesting the election as a SLFP candidate, but as a candidate of chauvinist forces", he concluded.

SLMC seeks assurance

The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) has sought an assurance from the ruling party and the opposition that the community would be given an autonomous Muslim-majority administrative unit in the Eastern Province. Rauf Hakeem, the SLMC chief, said that this condition was put to the United National Party's presidential candidate, Ranil Wickremesinghe, and would also be

conveyed to the ruling party's candidate, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse. "We will be meeting Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse to speak about long-neglected issues concerning Muslims." the SLMC leader

CWC to decide

The Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), a constituent of the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government has yet to decide on the strategy it would follow in the forthcoming presidential election, and as to which of the candidates to support as between Prime Minister Mahainda Rajapakse or Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe, the main contestants in the presidential race.

It is said that a section of the central committee of the CWC, which was founded by late leader Mr.S.Thondaman, and being now led by his grandson Mr.Arumugam Thondaman, has taken a stand that the CWC should extend its support to Mr.Mahinda Rajapakse, and another section wants it to support Mr.Ranil Wickremasinghe.

JHU supports Mahinda

Sept 7 - The Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) has pledged support to the Mahinda- JVP accord and will support the SLFP by signing an agreement with the Premier for the forthcoming Presidential elections.

Udaya Gammanpila, Policy Formulator and the legal advisor of the JHU said that the core issue of the forthcoming elections is whether Sri Lanka should be a unitary or a federal state. Presently there is a polarisation in the society as to what 'should be governmental structure', because some think the ideal set up is a federal state, whereas the others say it should be unitary," he said.

He said that JHU was totally against the UNP party candidate seeking for a mandate to set up a federal state and will support the Mahinda-JVP agreement as it would secure a unitary Sri Lanka.

"Until this Presidential election none of the parties sought a mandate to establish a federal set up in this country, but for Mr. Wickremasinghe, who has said that he will seek a mandate for a federal state. Therefore we will not support the UNP, but will back the agreement between the Prime Minister and the JVP," he said. Gammanpila said Wickremasinghe claiming to set up a federal state and agreeing to establish P-TOMS is a serious issue, which will tend to back 'separatist ideas'.

"All parties who support a unitary system should come together to field Mahinda Rajapakse to secure a unitary state. We endorse and welcome the move by the premier and the JVP and believe that this is a progressive attempt to defeat federalism," he said.

He said that unlike many things that politicians say and do, federalism is irreversible and therefore a very treacherous issue. "Many things that politicians do can be reversed, but once a federal state is established with the consensus of the central and the provincial government, it is irreparable," he said.

UPF split

Upcountry People Front led by P. Chandrasekaran appears to be split over the question as to which candidate to support in the forthcoming presidential election.

At a meeting held at the Prime Minister's official residence, a delegation from the UPF led by its Administrative Secretary and Provincial Councillor S. Arulsamy pledged their support to the Prime Minister at the election.

Mr. Arulsamy said they took this decision without consulting their party's leader S. Chandrasekaran."Mr. Chandrasekaran did not disagree with us when we struck deals with the government earlier without consulting him, and therefore he would not raise any objection to this decision," he said.

He said a separate ministry to serve the estate workers was created during the UPFA regime and it was one reason for them to support Mr. Rajapakse at the election.

"Mr. Rajapakse agreed to build separate housing units for estate workers instead of the existing line rooms. He also agreed to appoint people from the plantation areas to government institutions as a solution to the lack of Tamil speaking public servants," he said.

However, party leader P. Chandrasekaran later reportedly said that the members including two provincial councillors who had pledged their support to Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse would be taken to task. Speaking to the Daily Mirror from Karachi, Mr. Chandrasekaran said he would not allow anybody in the party to take such arbitrary decisions and on his return to the country would decide on disciplinary action against them.

"We are yet to take a decision regarding our stand at the forthcoming presidential election. No one in the party can take decisions on their own. Next week, after consulting party members we will be announcing which candidate we will support," he said.

Meanwhile, provincial council member and the party's administrative secretary S. Arulsami reiterated that the group who met the Premier would not change its decision to support him. "Once the leader returns to the country, we will discuss the matter with him. Even if the party decides to support the UNP at the election, we will stand by our decision," he said. Mr. Arulsami said they were prepared for any disciplinary action by the party. "I have been the administrative secretary of the party for the past three and half years. But despite numerous requests I have not received a copy of the party's constitution. Therefore, I do not know the kind of disciplinary action that is to be taken against us," he said. ❑

A recipe for disaster

D.B.S. Jeyaraj

The compelling need to garner as many sources of voter support as possible has made Mahendra Percy Rajapakse alias Mahinda Rajapakse commit what may very well be a major political blunder.

The electoral arrangement that Mahinda has reached with the Peoples Liberation Front or Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) will be in his case the albatross around the ancient mariner's neck.

The road to hell they say is paved with good intentions. In Mahinda's case too the agreement with the "rathu sahodarayas" (the red comrades) was a well-intentioned move to broaden his vote base and ensure a sweeping victory. Unfortunately the terms and conditions of this deal with the crimson comrades may result in the opposite taking place and make the exercise totally counterproductive.

Though the Sinhala hawks are chortling with premature glee about the great victory that the Ruhunu Puthra - Rathu Sahadoraya deal is going to usher in this column opines that such hopes are greatly exaggerated. The anticipated victory may never ever be registered.

Mahinda Rajapakse faces three hurdles each of them formidable in ascending order. Firstly he has to secure the full agreement and support of his own party and leader for the terms of this alliance. Secondly he has to win the Presidential election on the basis of this alliance. Thirdly he has to govern the Country with peace and prosperity according to the policies outlined in this alliance.

The JVP has been quick off the mark in announcing the deal with Mahinda Rajapakse. The crimson comrades have pointed out that their business is only with Mahinda Rajapakse the presidential candidate and not the party to which he belongs. So Mahinda has to secure party approval for this conditional alignment. He has to particularly gain his party leader Chandrika Kumaratunga's consent and support for this alliance.

Kumaratunga had earlier given him a free hand in forging an alliance with the JVP. This was in keeping with her often unprincipled approach characterised as pragmatism in sharing her political bed with strange bedfellows. While allowing Mahinda freedom to forge an alliance with the JVP Kumaratunga was also careful about its limits.

The "Daily News" of September 6th reported, "Though she was not against the party forging a united action plan with the JVP, the President nevertheless stressed that this should not be at the expense of compromising the party's policies. ..... She emphasised that care should be exercised to ensure no agreement is reached that would weaken or erode the base of the SLFP."

It is a well-known fact that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party has acquired a new face and new direction under the leadership of Chandrika Kumaratunga. The most notable among these are on the ethnic and economic fronts. Discarding the "unitary" state concept to the dustbin of history and setting up a federal or quasi-federal state in a "united" Sri Lanka is a key policy of the present SLFP. Embracing capitalism with a human face in an open, liberalised economy is another achievement of the party under Kumaratunga.

These changes in ethnic and economic policy were significant points of departure from the old SLFP. The twelve point agreement between Mahinda and the JVP is nothing but a reversal of this position. Mahinda and his crimson comrades are trying to make the SLFP go "forward" into the past. This is not an exercise in progressing forward, but a regression of the highest order.

Despite her magnanimity towards Mahinda in recent times even Chandrika cannot accept these conditions numbering a "dirty dozen". To do so would be to admit that all her policies of the past were utterly wrong. If Rajapakse has indeed accepted the JVP conditions without any reservation it can only mean that the SLFP has completely surrendered to the JVP. Neither leader nor party can stomach this making it doubtful as to whether. Rajapakse can persuade his boss lady or party colleagues endorse this deal.

Even if Kumaratunga and party endorse this deal, Rajapakse is not guaranteed of victory. It is not a case of political arithmetic where the votes of SLFP and JVP are added up vis-à-vis the UNP. There is also what could be called political algebra. The terms and conditions of the Mahinda - JVP arrangement can wreak havoc with existing voting patterns and political configurations.

If the SLFP-JVP axis is finalised on these terms then there is every likelihood of the ultra-reactionary Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) also falling in line. This axis could result in the Sinhala Christian vote going to the UNP. The economic policies spelt out in the JVP-Mahinda document can only spell doom in the future. Against that backdrop sections of the Sinhala middle classes too could shift their support towards the opposite camp.

The emphasis on a unitary state, abolition of the executive presidency along with the unrealistic policies of dealing with the LTTE and Oslo etc. are certain to upset the minorities. The Sri Lankan Tamils will be compelled to support Wickremasinghe. Even those circles troubled over Wickremasinghe's "softness" towards the LTTE may consider that to be the lesser evil in contrast with Rajapakse's "hardness". The JVP conditions can only result in total breakdown of the peace process and push the country towards open full-scale war.

In such a situation Tamil political parties including the Ceylon Workers Congress will find it difficult to support Rajapakse. This goes for Muslim factions in the Government like those headed by Ferial Ashraff, Athaullah and Badiurdeen Further-

more even if these parties accept the status quo the members of communities they claim to represent may not. The minority vote may swing massively against the Mahinda-JVP nexus because of some of the conditions in this agreement.

In the context of a minority community and middle class vote swing and in a situation where the UNP has continuously retained a minimum vote bank of 35%, the chances of Mahinda winning the Presidency in tow with the JVP on the basis of the twelve conditions are extremely remote.

Even if Rajapakse were to win there is that third hurdle of good governance if President Rajapakse tries to govern according to the twelve commandments laid down by the crimson comrades. The JVP in typical Sinhala supremacist fashion thinks conditions can be imposed on the LTTE without their consent. The Sinhala hardliners including our red comrades are yet to realise that Colombo has lost the previous war with the Tigers.

The changes proposed by the JVP on the ethnic front including a potential jettisoning of Norway will certainly lead to a collapse of what is left of the peace process. War would be inevitable.

Economically the notions outlined in the twelve commandments will lead to a cut back in most international aid and assistance. Foreign investment will take nosedive. The economy too will take a tumble. This process would be accelerated and aggravated by the outbreak of war. What lies in store therefore for a JVP inspired dispensation under President Mahinda Rajapakse is total disaster.

Change without order results in chaos. Order without change results in stagnation. In a "Mahinda Rajya" established according to the twelve commandments of the JVP there will be both chaos and stagnation.

What is pathetically absurd about this scenario is that had Mahinda the gumption and guts to stay firm the JVP could have come around to extending unconditional support to Rajapakse. At worst the comrades would have stayed neutral. Realpolitik being what it is the JVP would have really had no choice if Rajapakse was bold. Instead of calling the JVP bluff Mahinda has allowed the JVP to bluff him.

A direct or indirect alliance for electoral purposes with the JVP is not to be faulted. Any alignment with the JVP based on the stated twelve conditions would be nothing but a recipe unmitigated disaster for Mahinda the presidential candidate, his party and ultimately the Country. ❑

Election Campaign: Preventing Polarisation

Jayadeva Uyangoda

Sri Lanka's new presidential election campaign is slowly shaping up. It will heat up only after the nominations are officially submitted which is likely to happen during the next few weeks.

Unless there are separate Tamil or Muslim candidates backed respectively by main Tamil and Muslim political formations, the real contest will gravitate around the two principal candidates, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

If there is a separate JVP candidate, in addition to adding a lot of colour to the election campaign, it will hurt Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse's chances. Meanwhile, a separate JHU candidate is unlikely to have an impact on the outcome of the election this time around. The JHU has largely lost its glamour among the Sinhalese middle class voters in and around Colombo. The candidate who can forge the broadest ethnic and social alliance will have the greatest chance to win.

I make these sweeping statements at the risk, or rather for the fun, of further irritating my regular detractors. I am delighted that this column inspires three or four other columnists to respond to me quite intensely although their responses are not always presented in the spirit of democratic civility. That to me is a part of the occupational hazard of being an advocate of political moderation in a society ripped apart by conflict, violence, hatred and envy.

Campaigns To get back to my main theme, election campaigns in Sri Lanka have almost regularly contributed to the polarization of the public debate on critical issues in a manner that has only aggravated the multiple crises in our society.

The approach to the ethnic conflict in general and the strategy to engage with the LTTE have been the most critical issues that have repeatedly polarised the debate. As it often happened, the two main parties/alliances, the SLFP/PA/UPFA and UNP/UNF, have in the past played the game of appealing to extreme nationalist sentiments of the Sinhalese electorate on the premise that arousing the fears and anxieties of the Sinhalese nationalist mind would bring in votes and electoral victory.

The UNP strategy at the Presidential election in November 1994 was exactly that and it did not quite work. The PA repeated that strategy in the December 2001 parliamentary election and failed.

In April 2004, the UPFA succeeded in winning the election through an intense campaign of polarizing the electorate. The UPFA strategy at that parliamentary election was to frame the ethnic conflict and peace process in pro- and anti-LTTE terms and present to the electorate a black-and-white option.

At the forthcoming Presidential election too, the risk of such polarisation looms large. The necessary ingredients for reducing the electoral options in stark terms of black-and-white are easily available

at present. The peace process between the government and the LTTE is at a standstill. In the midst of escalating violence, the cease-fire agreement is being observed more in the breach.

The LTTE is identified as the main culprit of most of the breaches. The Kadirgamar assassination occurred only the other day. Against this background, anti-LTTE sentiments are rampant in Sinhalese society. Norway has re-emerged as the whipping boy for some leading politicians. In an age of economic globalisation and globalised domestic peace, some may see the political utility of xenophobia during an election.

The JVP and JHU appear to frame their political campaigns and slogans in an exclusively anti-LTTE position. This is where Prime Minister Rajapakse's campaign might run the risk of appropriating, or capitulating before, the JVP-JHU strategy of polarisation. Perhaps, the Prime Minister is aware of the risk. That may be the reason why he is reported to have told the Associated Press the other day that he was willing even to walk the extra mile for peace, even meeting the LTTE leader in the Vanni.

A Broad Framework -

Despite pressures from their potential alliance partners, the two principal candidates – Rajapakse and Wickremesinghe – need to define a broad framework of consensus to address the challenge of advancing the peace process in difficult times.

They should use the election campaign to put before the electorate that framework which the winner can actually implement. This is where the actors in democratic civil society can meaningfully intervene in promoting ideas and dialogue.

At least there are four 'commitments' that the two main candidates should ideally make. Strengthening the cease-fire agreement and its proper implementation in order to prevent further escalation of violence, including political killings, is the first. The second is maintaining the state's commitment to finding a political solution to the ethnic conflict in a framework of power sharing.

The Oslo Communiqué and the Tokyo Declaration have already set out the broad principles as well as an outline of a 'road map' to this end. Incidentally, both the UNF and UPFA governments have accepted these principles.

The need now is to reiterate that commitment during the election campaign. The third involves broadening and making inclusive the negotiation process to ensure the par-

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Visits London, 21 – 23 October 2005

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi

Amma
the Hugging Saint

Free programme in London: 21st-23rd October 2005
Devotional singing, spiritual talks, meditation and the opportunity to receive Amma's blessing (darshan)

Crystal Palace National Sports Centre
London SE19 2BB

For more info, contact: 0207 603 6868 or visit www.amma.org.uk

"Amma's darshan nourishes a deep hunger of the heart" *Ram Dass*

Mata Amritanandamayi is a recognised worldwide humanitarian and spiritual leader from Kerala, India. Her teachings and charitable institutions help millions of people of all faiths and nationalities around the globe - she has been visiting London every year for the last 17 years, and over 12,000 people come to see her when she visits Crystal Palace, for three days.

Following the recent terrorist attacks, London is especially in need of a voice which speaks to the underlying unity of all faiths – that of love and spirituality. Amma (Mother), as she is more commonly known, was:

- An invited guest speaker at the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders held at the United Nations in New York in August 2000.
- The keynote speaker at The Global Peace Initiative of Women Religious and Spiritual Leaders, at the United Nations in Geneva, where she also received the Gandhi-King Award for Non-Violence.
- And more recently, she made the closing address at the World Parliament of Religions in Barcelona, In her speech, she said: "The problem arises when we say, 'Our religion is right, yours is wrong.' ... Love and compassion are the very essence of all religions... Indeed, love is the only religion that can help humanity to rise to great and glorious heights. Love should be the one string on which all religions and philosophies are strung together."*
- Additionally, her NGO Charity was recently conferred advisory status by the United Nations, and she has also been recognised worldwide for pledging $23m to fund tsunami relief.
- The World renowned Anthropologist Dr Jane Goodall said of Amma at the United Nations in Geneva 2002, " She stands here in front of us, God's Love in a human body"

Amma's keynote address at the closing Plenary Session of the 2004 Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona. can be read at: www.amritapuri.org/amma/pwr2004/ barcelona.php

'Come and meet Amma, the embodiment of love and one of the great humanitarians of our time'

(This is an advertisement)

ticipation of all communities who should be co-owners of the process towards the settlement as well as the negotiated settlement itself. The fourth commitment is to continue the reconstruction efforts in areas affected both by the war and the tsunami without any discrimination.

The candidates could obviously have their distinct approaches with varied nuances within this broad framework. For example, on the question of continuing political engagement with the LTTE, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition might have their own strategies, timetables and tactical preferences. The question of how to strengthen the CFA and implement it with accountability might also be one about which the two main Presidential aspirants may have distinct and different approaches.

The point is that let the differences between them emerge on those finer points while they agree on the basic framework.

Election campaigns in Sri Lanka have been occasions for politicians and their publicists to utterly simplify critical public issues, distort policy priorities and commit the state to disastrous policy options.

The ethnic question has suffered this fate for too many years, at too many election campaigns. Perhaps, Sri Lanka's democratic civil society should now assert itself to arrest this process by making constructive interventions with leading Presidential candidates. Election campaign needs to be transformed into occasions for serious public engagement with critical policy and political issues.

Persuading the main candidates to make commitments towards a broad framework of principles on the ethnic conflict, the peace process, negotiations, human rights and political reforms are now necessary. Perhaps, a civil society agenda for peace and democratic reforms needs to be worked out as the basis of dialogue for candidates and their parties. ❑

CPA Calls for review of CFA and redesign of the peace process

The Centre for Policy Alternatives of Sri Lanka, in condemning "the brutal and cowardly assassination of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar" has welcomed "the possibility of the signatories of the Cease fire Agreement meeting to review it", and stated "that a fundamental review and redesign of the peace process is crucially necessary."

The following is the full text of the statement dated 24 August signed and issued by its Executive Dr.Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Centre for Policy Alternatives:

"The brutal and cowardly assassination of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar is a grim reminder to all that the three years following the ceasefire agreement has not gone beyond the state of a 'negative peace' or what is called a 'No War No Peace' syndrome. CPA unequivocally condemns the assassination and extends our condolences to Mr Kadirgamar's family. Mr Kadirgamar was a champion of the unity of Sri Lanka, a just, democratic and durable peace, and universally recognized as the best Foreign Minister this country has had. His brutal assassination tragically underscores the obstacles to making peace in Sri Lanka and the imperative of addressing them as a matter of the utmost priority.

While an all-out war was brought to a halt by the ceasefire agreement more than three years ago and six sessions of negotiations took place between the Government of Sri Lanka(GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) before they were suspended over two years ago, violations of the ceasefire agreement with a direct and adverse impact on the state of human rights and human security, continue unabated. Political killings and child conscription with impunity, in particular, despite condemnations from civil society and the international community, have weighed heavily on the peace process and eroded broad support for even 'negative' peace. In this, the LTTE has to shoulder the primary responsibility just as much as the assassination of Lakshman Kadirgamar has all the hallmarks of an LTTE act of terrorism, despite its arrogant denials.

The burden now lies with the GoSL and the investigating authorities to come out with conclusive evidence that can stand the test of judicial proceedings and the due process of law. Furthermore, they must take all measures to apprehend, convict and punish the perpetrators of this dastardly crime, including the conspirators and, in particular, those who masterminded it. The fact that the LTTE is a party to the peace process should not in any way prevent or impede the investigative and judicial process. And, the LTTE, if as it claims was not responsible, must surely cooperate with the investigations rather than "challenge" the authorities to find the culprits.

In addition to the above, a primary responsibility lies with the GoSL and the LTTE to engage in principled negotiations and to conduct the peace process in a manner that is sustainable and open to scrutiny. The battle between State sovereignty and LTTE's pursuit of legitimacy and a Tamil Statehood, has relegated to the

background the critical task of finding a just and durable solution to the Ethnic Question that involves all legitimate stakeholders in the country and which is based on power-sharing, autonomy, democracy and human rights. Unfortunately, the peace process has hardly moved beyond the stage of the big guns falling silent, while attacks on human rights and human security continue unabated and with impunity.

The peace process has also not moved beyond the exploration of interim structures to deal with immediate humanitarian needs to addressing the root causes of the conflict and to redressing them. We consider the peace process to be flawed and call on Norway to consider redesigning it in consultation with the GoSL, LTTE and all legitimate stakeholders in this country. In this context we welcome the possibility of the signatories of the Cease fire Agreement meeting to review it. However, we note that a fundamental review and redesign of the peace process is crucially necessary.

This should take into account the need for principled negotiations to advance the process to a conclusion, rather than rely on a series of interim and ad hoc measures. The ultimate responsibility lies not only with the parties to the conflict and negotiations (i.e. GoSL, LTTE and Norway) but with all sections of the Sri Lankan polity and civil society to ensure and guarantee the above. A heavy burden also lies with the international community, given that the peace process is heavily internationalized.

The international community has to extend its fullest support to the above process, including, if need be, sanctions. The Oslo Communiqué and the Tokyo Declaration we believe, continue to have relevance and should inform the peace process.

This is the least that we can do for all those who laid down their lives, like Lakshman Kadrigamar, for a peace that is based on democracy, human rights and justice for all." ❑

PM Pays a Heavy Price for JVP Support

Jehan Perera

Through a series of electoral agreements Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse has aligned himself with a formidable array of political forces that have given his presidential campaign a major psychological boost. The most important agreement is undoubtedly the one he has signed with the JVP which has emerged as a significant political party in its own right. In particular the JVP's highly motivated party machinery is one that can make a crucial difference in mobilizing the voting population and bringing out the vote for the candidate they support. There are also other agreements the Prime Minister has entered or is in the process of finalizing with smaller parties such as the JHU, EPDP and Muslim parties.

The JVP in particular has reason to be satisfied with its success in negotiating the electoral agreement it has with the Prime Minister. A few weeks ago the JVP seemed to be in the doldrums after its confrontation with President Chandrika Kumaratunga on the issue of the joint tsunami recovery structure with the LTTE. The JVP appeared to have made a strategic blunder in leaving the government and losing political decision making power. But with the one-sided agreement they have got Mr Rajapakse to sign, the JVP has bounced back in the public eye as the power behind the Prime Minister, instead of it being the other way round. The agreement signed by the Prime Minister appears to be one that was drafted by the JVP with minimal input, if at all, by the Prime Minister as it bears no resemblance whatsoever to the ruling party's policies.

The JVP has a further reason to be satisfied. By making the Prime Minister their presidential candidate, they have avoided the risks inherent in putting forward a candidate of their own, and thereby exposing the true nature of their mass political strength, or lack thereof. But the JVP's political gain and the Prime Minister's own gains have come at a severe price to the ruling party. The biggest price has been the ditching of the SLFP's policies with regard to the ethnic conflict, the peace process and the economy and the consequent erosion of the trust and confidence in the party. The concepts of federalism as the basis of a negotiated political settlement of the ethnic conflict, the Norwegian-facilitated peace process and a liberal open-market style economic development programme have all been negated by the Prime Minister's agreement with the JVP.

Given the reversals in the SLFP's policies that have taken place, it is no cause for surprise that Mr Rajapakse has put himself on a collision course with President Kumaratunga who retains leadership over both the government and the ruling party. In a strongly worded letter to her Prime Minister, the President has questioned how he has decided to abrogate an agreement on tsunami recovery that was unanimously approved by the cabinet and SLFP party committees. She has also queried the logic of Mr Rajapakse's assertion that he is willing to go an extra mile for peace, and his proposal to negotiate directly with LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran after signing an agreement that will forbid a federal type of power sharing solution.

Astonishing reversals

It is quite astonishing what the Prime Minister has done on his own without the approval of his party membership or the rest of the party leadership. A concrete example would be the joint mechanism on tsunami recovery with the LTTE. Just over two months ago, the Prime

Minister himself presented the draft agreement on the establishment of a Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure to Parliament. Prior to presenting this draft agreement in Parliament, it had been agreed to by both the ruling party and the cabinet of ministers. Thereafter the P-TOMS agreement was signed by the government and LTTE. The international community, including India urged and approved this agreement. However, in the very first clause of the electoral agreement with the JVP, the Prime Minister had pledged to abrogate the P-TOMS agreement.

If Prime Minister Rajapakse should unilaterally abrogate the P-TOMS agreement that his own government signed with the LTTE, it would be a political replay of the past fifty years of ethnic conflict at its worst. Instead of building upon the hard fought political gains made by his government over the past 11 years of war and peace, Mr Rajapakse's agreement with the JVP seeks with one stroke of the pen to unilaterally undo them all. This is political irresponsibility at its highest for a government leader, although it may be a great political triumph for the JVP. The Prime Minister needs to be reminded that it is precisely this type of unilateral decision making by the Sinhalese political leadership that led the Tamil people to vote for parties that advocated separation.

When the P-TOMS agreement was signed it was seen as signalling a possible revival of the peace process. While these expectations did not materialize due to the matter being taken to the Supreme Court and then by the assassination of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, it is not surprising that Mr Rajapakse's agreement with the JVP has upset if not enraged powerful sections of the ruling SLFP headed by President Kumaratunga. When she led the government to sign the P-TOMS agreement with the LTTE, President Kumaratunga was hailed both locally and internationally for bravely facing down opposition to the joint mechanism that emanated from Sinhalese nationalist forces of the JVP and JHU.

The manner in which Prime Minister Rajapakse has been prepared to unilaterally undo a formal agreement signed by the government would send a very negative message to the world that Sri Lankan governments cannot be trusted to keep to their word. If this matter is thought about with a measure of rationality it would be seen to be a very irresponsible position for the Prime Minister to take. If Mr Rajapakse had been an opposition politician who had fought tooth and nail against the P-TOMS agreement, it would be more understandable if he wished to renegotiate the P-TOMS agreement. But having been an important member of a government that signed the agreement, and not having protested publicly when it was signed, the Prime Minister cuts a very opportunistic and unprincipled figure when he now wishes to abrogate the agreement.

High price

The high price to the country and its image that Prime Minister Rajapakse has been willing to pay for reaching agreement with the JVP is made higher by potentially reopening the debate about the legitimacy of the Tamil demand for separation. At the Oslo peace talks of December 2002 the LTTE agreed to explore a federal solution in placed of its demand for a separate state. However, clause number three of the Prime Minister's agreement with the JVP is a commitment to preserve the centralized unitary form of government in which there can be no genuine sharing of power with regional authorities. If a federal solution is either blocked or rejected, the LTTE may once again see an opportunity to campaign publicly for a separate state.

It is likely that even the Tamil political parties, such as the EPDP, that have politically aligned themselves to Prime Minister Rajapakse's campaign will find themselves in an embarrassing position following the agreement with the JVP. Their situation is likely to become even more difficult if the Prime Minister signs another agreement with the JHU, which is even more of a champion of Sinhalese nationalism than the JVP. It will become well nigh impossible for Tamil political parties to face their electorates as the ally of a politician who rejects federalism, power sharing and the honouring of signed agreements as the solution to the ethnic conflict.

Some of the news reports indicate that Prime Minister Rajapakse did not have the time or the inclination to carefully peruse and analyse the documents that were placed before him to sign. It seems that the Prime Minister, who was not a confidante of the President, was not able to develop his statecraft because the opportunities were not provided to him.

The reason he has risen to the highest position of leadership of the ruling party is his affable and people-friendly nature that has made him immensely popular with the masses of Sinhalese people. But being down to earth and a man of the people is not a sufficient qualification for governance in a multi-ethnic and polarized society that is yet in the throes of civil and ethnic conflict. As a leader who wishes to be the President of all Sri Lankans, Mr Rajapakse must be sensitive to the hopes and aspirati-ons of the Tamil people and other ethnic minorities who look upon him to become a truly national leader, and not only the leader of Sin-halese.

It is likely that in the days that follow, Mr Rajapakse and the government itself will come under increasing local and international pressure to revise his stances on the issues of P-TOMS, the unitary state and also on revising the ceasefire agreement and replacing Norway as the facilitator. President Kumaratunga has expressed her determination to draft the party manifesto with the consent of the party membership regardless of Mr Rajapakse's agreements with other political parties. It would be better if the Prime Minister were to take the initiative to renegotiate the agreements he has signed with the JVP and other parties rather than have President Kumaratunga use her authority to compel him to do so. ❑

South Asia Scene

Sethu project, an election issue

The controversial Sethu Samudram project is progressively turning out to be a political football in Tamilnadu with parties guided by vote bank politics since Tamilnadu is going for a general election next year.

Seeking electoral mileage, the Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has in a shrewd move raise the stakes by calling upon the central government in Delhi to stop dredging.

In a deliberate move to register her anger against the Congress-led Federal government, she avoided turning up at the airport when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh recently visited Chennai.

Jayalaitha's main rival in the state of Tamil Nadu, the Dravida Munnetra Kalagam (DMK) is championing the Sethu Samudram project. T Baalu, who belongs to the DMK, as the minister for shipping in the federal government, has been vigorously promoting the project.

In what is seen as a populist move, Jayalalitha, on her part, is making common cause with the fishermen folk and environmentalists who are opposed to the Sethu Samudram project, which is being designed to reduce cruising time between east and west coast of India. While she is claiming credit for the project pointing out that the project has become a reality only due to the consistent efforts of former Chief Minister MGR and herself over a period, she says that the project must be implemented only after clearing the environmental risks involved.

Due to the movement of the dredgers in the Palk Strait, fishing nets worth several lakhs of rupees had been damaged angering the fishing community. And Jayalalitha is seeking to milk this anger for her electoral advantage.

In what is described as a hardhitting statement, she said that "the manner in which the project is being implemented proves that my apprehensions about it are correct." "Any development project should be implemented only with the cooperation of the people and going ahead with the Sethusamudram project adamantly will be meaningless. My government cannot be a mere spectator when the fishing community is being affected and it cannot be allowed to be carried out any more," Jayalalithaa said

According to her, the seaweeds, which facilitate fish breeding, are being destroyed during dredging and, as a result, the entire deep-sea environment has totally transformed, in turn, severely affecting the fish production.

Fishermen have complained that shrimps have almost become extinct in these areas, which prior to the dredging operations used to yield a catch of 20,000 kg a day. Apart from these, dolphins and other rare species of fish have started migrating to other places, Jayalalithaa said.

"At a time when they are getting a new lease of life after the tsunami, the fishermen are once again made to lose their livelihood resources due to the project," the Tamilnadu chief minister said.

Throwing a direct challenge to her political rivals the Chief Minister said, "The UPA Government at the Centre, the leader of its constituent party DMK, M Karunanidhi and Union Minister T R Baalu, who were playing with the future of lakhs of fishermen only with a view to gain political mileage, should be held accountable for all the damages caused to the community."

Kashmir, Breaking new ground

The recent face-to-face talks between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Hurriyat of Kashmir have succeeded in breaking new ground with PM stating that he is committed to ensuring peace, self respect and dignity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the Hurriayt leaders showering praise on Manmohan Singh as a man of conscience.

Both sides agreed at the end of three hour long free, frank and open talks at the Prime Minister's official residence here that dialogue process should continue. Manmohan Singh offered to cut back troops if there is a decrease in level of violence and infiltration from across the border and Pak occupied Kashmir.

Responding to various points made by the Hurriyat leaders, he said all cases of detention would be reviewed in a time bound manner and instructions would go out to ensure there were no human rights violations.

Mirwaiz Omer Farooq who led the five member Hurriyat team ignoring the jeers and taunts from hardliner separatists said that they would be presenting some new proposals to the government soon.

While no date has yet been announced for the next round, it is going to be held with the Prime Miniter himself and a committee representing both sides would be constituted to go into knitty-gritty, according to Farooq. He commended the Prime Minister for the confidence building measures like a bus service between the two Kashmirs, he has agreed to with Pakistan.

This is the first formal contact between the government and Hurriyat after the 'familiarization' talks the NDA regime held with the separatists in January and March last year. Significantly, Manmohan Singh is going to meet President Musharraf in less than a fortnight in New York where the Kashmir issue is going to figure.

Hurriyat stand has all along been that they be involved in the talks between India and Pakistan. That demand may not be accepted since they lack the representative character but the separatist amalgam has succeeded in establishing a direct rapport with Delhi and drive home its point that Kashmir is as much a political problem as it is humanitarian issue.

Pakistan hails: Pakistan has welcomed the "spirit" behind the first formal talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Hurriyat leaders and said this is the only way the peace process could move forward.

"The most important thing is the spirit behind it," Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid M Kasuri, told reporters here on Wednesday after inaugurating the South Asia Media Center of the South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA). The center with all modern communication facilities is intended to play the role of a bridge among the South Asian countries."For durable peace, there has to be a resolution of the Kashmir dispute. And there are three parties (Pakistan, India and Kashmiris) and we want all of them to sit across the table," he said.

1975 Bangladesh coup illegal

DHAKA: 31 Aug - In a historic judgment, the High Court of Bangladesh has declared the tenures of three unconstitu-

tional rulers - Khondoker Moshtaque Ahmed, Justice Abu Sadat M. Sayem and Major General Ziaur Rahman - illegal and void.

The Court also declared the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, which ratified all martial law ordinances and orders, including the legalisation of the assassination of the country's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, illegal. The High Court Bench comprising Justices ABM Khairul Haq and ATM Fazle Kabir, however, noted that although all government activities between August 1975 and 1979 had been declared illegal, history could not be altered.

It said Khandker Mushtaque Ahmed's assumption of power on August 15, 1975 after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, placing the country under martial law, and taking the office of President by the Proclamation of August 20, 1975 were "in clear violation of the constitution and was done without lawful authority."

"Consequently, all his subsequent actions as President of Bangladesh were illegitimate and void," it observed. "Being beyond the ambit of the constitution, the handing over of the Martial Law Authority's office to Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman, by Abu Sadaat Mohammad Sayem by the Third Proclamation on November 29, 1976, enabling the latter to exercise the powers of Chief Martial Law Administrator, was illegal and done without lawful authority," it added. The judges also referred to the assumption of power by Gen. Zia, husband of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and founder of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), on April 21, 1977, and observed that it was also "beyond the ambit of the Constitution and as such illegal."

About the Referendum of 1977 on Gen. Zia's Presidency during the Martial Law, the High Court termed it was "unknown to the Constitution." The court, however, observed that due to the necessity of the state, "such a legal wrong can be condoned in certain circumstances" invoking the Doctrine of Necessity.

The landmark judgment was over a writ filed by Muksudul Alam, managing director of Moon Cinema of old Dhaka, who wanted the cinema hall back. It was declared "abandoned property" in 1973, following independence in 1971. However, various constitutional experts said the judgment has "come too late." Eminent jurist M. Zahir has termed the judgment "admirable." The former Law Minister, Abdul Matin Khasru, said, "Though too late, it's a bold judgment. We hope the Appellate Division will uphold it, for they are bound by oath to protect the Constitution." The judgment was, however, stayed by a chamber judge of the Appellate Division on Monday night. It will now be heard by the full bench of the Appellate Division.

Generals blamed for 1965 war

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Air Marshal during the 1965 war with India, Nur Khan, has said that not only the war was forced on India by Pakistan but that it was unnecessary and completely unplanned.

In startling disclosures in an interview to the English daily, Dawn, Air Marshal (retd.) Khan has said barring a few top generals in the Army, the war plan was not shared with other wings of the armed forces, which forced him to contemplate resignation in protest.

Air Marshal (retd.) Asghar Khan, while handing over the command to Nur

LinkAIR Travels Limited

Main Agent For

SRILANKAN AIRLINES

QATAR AIRWAYS

ANY TIME, ANYWHERE - YOU CAN GET THERE WITH LINKAIR WECAN GET YOU THE BEST FARE, THE OTHERS WON'T COMPARE MAKE SURE YOU BOOK WITH LINKAIR

SRI LANKAN AIRLINES

COLOMBO from £410
(Valid between 1st Aug 05 to 18th Sept 05)
INDIA from £325
HONGKONG, BANGKOK
SINGAPORE
KUALA LUMPUR from £360
(Valid from 20th Aug 05 to 30th Nov 05)

QATAR AIRWAYS

COLOMBO from £390
INDIA from £295
DUBAI from £215
SINGAPORE from £390
KUALA LUMPUR from £390
BANGKOK from £380
(Valid from 20th Aug 05 to 30th Nov 05)

IATA

Our phone lines now open from 7 am to 11pm, 7 days a week

5047 ATOL PROTECTED

Please ring 020 8665 0206

Or book on-line, take your TIME and plan your TRAVEL at your LEISURE www.linkair.co.uk

Linkair Travels Ltd, 361 London Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 3PB

Khan had not briefed him about any impending war because he was not aware of it himself. So, in order to double check, Nur Khan called on the then Commander-in-Chief, General Musa Khan. When questioned, Gen. Musa admitted that something was afoot.

A still highly sceptical Nur Khan was then asked to meet Lt. Gen. Akhtar Hasan Malik, GOC Kashmir, the man in charge of "Operation Gibraltar", for further details.

Gen. Malik told him not to worry, "because the plan to send in some 800,000 infiltrators inside the occupied territory to throw out the Indian troops with the help of the local population," was so designed that the Indians would not be able to retaliate; therefore the air force need not get into the war mode.

"The performance of the Army did not match that of the PAF mainly because the leadership was not as professional. They had planned 'Operation Gibraltar' for self-glory rather than in the national interest. It was a wrong war. And they misled the nation with a big lie that India rather than Pakistan had provoked the war and that we were the victims of Indian aggression," Air Marshal Khan said.

Air Marshal Khan said the Generals who blundered in the 1965 war should have been brought to book. (The Hindu)

Nepal as a mirror to South Asia's dilemmas

In co-incidental developments which would help greatly in defining and clarifying the "structural violence" currently gripping parts of South Asia, some 23 paramilitary soldiers have died in a bomb blast in India's eastern state of Chhattisgarh, triggered by suspected Maoist rebels, while in neighbouring Nepal, counterparts of the latter have reportedly declared a three-month unilateral truce in their long-running bloody rebellion with the Nepalese central authorities, in an effort to parley with Nepal's political parties.

Although the observer would tend to focus more intently on the developments in Nepal on account of the graver nature of the political crisis gripping that state and the resultant, increasingly mounting bloodshed, it is the report on the Chhatisgarh violence which is more revealing.

While the broad aim of the People's Liberation Army in Nepal in declaring the ceasefire is said to be the formation of an oppositional front against the Nepalese monarch, with the country's political parties, the report from India says that the Maoists of Eastern India - active in at least five states - "are battling for greater social and economic rights for indigenous tribes and landless farmers".

The latter proposition lays bare the "structural" or "systemic" roots of the current violence in Eastern India and Nepal.

That is, it focuses on the social and economic inequalities underlying the bloody violence, which in Nepal, has claimed tens of thousands of lives since the mid-nineties. The Maoist rebellion in Nepal thrives on these socio-economic inequalities and it is in the poorest and most depressed regions of Nepal that the Maoists enjoy their widest support.

In February, Nepal's King Gyanendra suspended the country's Cabinet and legislature and took over their powers, thus, virtually bringing to an end the democratic process in the troubled State.

This amounted to compounding Nepal's problems because the little representational governance it thus enjoyed was done away with, leaving the people voiceless.

The Maoists' strategy seems to be to muster all of Nepal's political forces for a campaign to restore parliamentary governance but it is unlikely to call a halt to its campaign of violence with the accomplishment of this limited aim. For, as long as factors such as poverty, caste-based oppression, minority victimization and religion and language-based discrimination exist in Nepal, the Maoist rebellion will secure considerable sustenance and remain in contention.

Nepal's constitution provides for equality among its citizens but does not accord special recognition to group rights, particularly in the socio-economic and cultural spheres. Thus, indigenous communities and national minorities cannot access any avenues of empowerment. Likewise, such depressed groups do not enjoy the benefits of positive discrimination because the constitution is yet to incorporate a Bill of Minority Rights and provide for the installation of mechanisms which would facilitate preferential treatment of this kind.

In this respect, Nepal differs vastly from India and so does Sri Lanka, except that Tamil is now accorded official language status in Lanka. But it is an open question whether a Tamil citizen of Sri Lanka could correspond comfortably with a State institution since it is not clear whether all State bodies have been vested with the facilities to give effect to the Tamil language provisions in the Lankan constitution.

However, India, unlike most of its neighbours, has worked towards the empowerment of its national minorities and depressed groups, for instance - to the best of its ability - by instituting the legislative provisions and mechanisms which make positive discrimination possible.

For instance, these groups enjoy a measure of political representation which is constitutionally-guaranteed.

That residual "structural violence" continues in India is proof that even in the "world's largest democracy" much more needs to be done to meet the aspirations of disaffected groups.

The ending of "anti-systemic" violence in South Asia, then, calls for a broad, humanistic vision on the part of its ruling elites. Group and minority rights must not only be recognized and constitutionally-enshrined, but also rendered realisable in very, concrete, practical terms. (Daily News, Colombo)

Women get better deal in Pakistan

Pakistan does better than India with 21.3per cent women parliamentarians as India ranked 134th among 183 countries with just 8.3per cent women members in the Lok Sabha.

According to data from the Inter-Par-

ATOL 75047
EMERGENCY TRAVEL ONLY »» -SRI LANKA
Please Call: 07956 676 360
-SOUTH INDIA
-SINGAPORE

liamentary Union, the parliament of Pakistan includes 21.3per cent women, placing it at a highly respectable rank of 40, higher than many western countries. The ranking is helped in no small measure by a law in 2002, under which 60 of the 342 seats in the national assembly (17per cent) are to be allocated to women.

According to statistics, it was revealed that India ranks 134th among 183 countries in terms of the percentage of women legislators (8.3per cent) in the national parliament (Lok Sabha).

While no country has more women than men in its national parliament, Rwanda heads the list with an impressive 48.8per cent of its parliamentarians being women. Again, it is committed to sending at least 30per cent women to parliament. Not surprisingly, Nordic countries dominate the top positions, with 39.9per cent of their parliament seats being occupied by women.

Sweden (45.3per cent), Norway (38.2per cent), Finland (37.5per cent) and Denmark (36.9per cent) follow Rwanda, while Iceland too is not far behind in the 18th position. Netherlands, Cuba, Spain, Costa Rica and Mozambique complete the top ten. As of June 30, 2005, 18 countries had a representation of greater than 30per cent for women, whereas 67 countries, including India, had a representation of less than 10per cent.

The global average for women parliamentarians is 15.8per cent, with the Americas having a representation of 18.8per cent, way behind the same figure for Nordic countries. Europe's parliaments (excluding Nordic countries) have 16.9per cent women with sub-Saharan Africa matching the global average of 15.8per cent and Asia (15.2per cent) being next in line.

Arab countries, in some of which women cannot stand for elections, have the lowest representation of 8.8per cent. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait and Bahrain are among the 10 countries with no women parliamentarian.

Pakistan is the undisputed leader amongst its South Asian counterparts. But India does much better than Nepal (5.9per cent) or Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, both having a sub-5per cent representation of women. While culture can be an explanation for some of these figures, it cannot explain why countries like the United States (15.2per cent), Britain (19.7per cent), France (12.2per cent) which rank high on gender equality index are comparatively low in terms of political representation. (Asian Tribune) ❑

Who is a moderate Muslim and how?

Hasan Suroor

Moderation has come to be defined in such narrow terms post- 9/11 that many of those now hailed as moderates, by Western governments desperately seeking Muslim allies, would have been judged differently in more normal circumstances.

THE "MODERATE" Muslim, who is routinely urged to stand up and take on the radicals, has become a bit of a cliché in the current debate on Islamist extremism. For few have a clear idea who exactly they mean when they talk about moderate Muslims. Moderate in relation to what and whom?

Admittedly, moderation is a relative term but it has become even more relative in the so-called war on terrorism with its limited aim of putting an end to violence rather than engaging in the more complex task of tackling ideas and issues that breed it. So, anyone who does not advocate violence, ipso facto, becomes a moderate and an ally even if he or she holds potentially obscurantist views on important issues such as individual freedom, women's rights, and freedom of speech, among others.

Moderation has come to be defined in such narrow terms in the post-9/11 climate that many of those who are now hailed as moderates by Western governments, desperately seeking Muslim allies in their campaign against terrorism, would have been judged rather differently in more normal circumstances.

A case in point is the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), its largest Muslim organisation and officially recognised as the most moderate face of Islam in the country. Its general secretary Iqbal Sacraine has been knighted in recognition of his contribution to inter-faith dialogue, though his critics say that he has been rather more useful in delivering Muslim votes to the Labour Party. But how "moderate" is he?

As Salman Rushdie has recalled, "this is the same Sacraine" who, in 1989, led the book-burning campaign over Satanic Verses. He endorsed the fatwa against Mr. Rushdie saying that given the supposed enormity of his offence, "death is perhaps too easy" for the author. Footage of his inflammatory speeches against the book and Mr. Rushdie was replayed by the BBC recently in a controversial programme that challenged his and the MCB's moderate credentials. Asked whether he would still respond the same way if the Rushdie affair were to be replayed his answer was eloquently vague. But shorn of the many "ifs" and "buts," it amounted to a mumbled yes.

"If Sir Iqbal Sacraine is the best Mr. Blair can offer in the way of a good Muslim, we have a problem," Mr. Rushdie wrote in The Times arguing that the choice of Mr. Sacraine illustrated the "weakness of the Government's strategy of relying on traditional, but essentially orthodox, Muslims to help eradicate Islamist radicalism."

True, but it also highlights a sad truth: the lack of choice when it comes to finding moderate Muslims who also have sufficient influence in the community. There are not too many who fit the bill. Not that the community does not have moderate figures but, from a government's point of view, it is no good promoting leaders who may be epitomes of moderation but are not taken seriously by fellow-Muslims whose views it wants to change.

It is that old leadership crisis, and the liberal Muslim intelligentsia has contributed to it by behaving as a "secular" elite afraid of soiling its hands with "sectional" issues - thus handing over the space to opportunistic elements. Essentially, Mr. Sacraine and other mainstream leaders like him are products of a leadership vacuum and they benefit from crisis situations, which suddenly make them

an important link with the community.

Prime Minister Tony Blair may talk passionately about combating ideas that produce terrorists but his Government's instinctive reaction when bombs are flying around is to get hold of someone who can help put out the fire. The logic is that if someone like Mr. Sacraine and his friends can be of use what is wrong in wooing them? And if a knighthood here, a peerage there, and invitations to Downing Street can help raise their profile and make them more respectable in the community, well, why not?

What Western governments are looking for are orthodox but non-fanatical "insiders" (as against secular "outsiders") - people who have enough acceptability within the community and can invoke the authority of Islam to denounce terrorism. It is argued that a message couched in an appropriately religious tone and delivered by seemingly "devout" Muslims who are in "communion" with the community has a greater chance of being given a hearing than a lecture on reforms by secularists whom the community regards as too elitist and detached.

The argument has short-termism written all over it and suggests that there is neither a strategy in place, nor a political will to help Muslims find a more dynamic leadership. But then governments everywhere tend to prefer to do business with the devil they know, especially when the choice is limited and it may take years and a lot of hard work to find an alternative, which may or may not live up to the expectations. At least, the frontline leadership of the Muslim Council of Britain can talk the talk and, when under pressure, is good at making appropriate noises. Indeed, it has been doing that rather well since 9/11, sometimes even in the face of opposition from the more hardline groups. The Government fears that the alternative to the MCB could be even worse. So, in the present climate the choice, really, is not so much between moderates as between whoever is less of a hardliner.

Having said that, leaders from a traditional mould can - if they wish - play a positive role for the simple reason that conservative Hindu and Muslim faith groups feel more comfortable with them than with secularists who remain on the fringes of community life. It is a mistake to dismiss all traditional leaders as necessarily obscurantist, communal and backward-looking. No doubt, most happen to be status quoists and have a vested interest in keeping the community backward in order to maintain their hold on them, but there have been many exceptions both among Hindus and Muslims. Many of the reforms in the Hindu community were *spearheaded by* traditional and deeply religious figures, and one of the most prominent Indian Muslim reformers, Syed Ahmed Khan, the founder of Aligarh Muslim University, also came from a "traditional" background.

Traditional and modern

Sir Syed was a practising Muslim who acknowledged the importance of religion but, at the same time, he was also a modern man, and was able to mobilise the community around a modernising agenda. What is more, as The Daily Telegraph writer Mihir Bose notes, it was in the "depth of Muslim despair" (not very different from the situation today) that Sir Syed emerged to lead them to modernity - encouraging them to free themselves from "customs and beliefs that were outdated and hidebound."

Another "traditional" leader who became a major Muslim reformer was the late President Zakir Hussain, one of the founders of Jamia Millia Islamia. (Ironically, seeds of narrow Muslim nationalism and separatism were sown not by "traditional" leaders but by a highly westernised, secular and modern figure like Mohammed Ali Jinnah.)

People like Sir Syed and Dr. Zakir Hussain were able to separate religion from politics and, more importantly, they had a vision for the community, which the present-day leaders lack. Mr. Sacraine and his counterparts in other countries are, essentially, ambitious politicians in search of a constituency and an agenda - and a community feeling under siege is just what the doctor ordered.

Mr. Rushdie has dismissed Britain's Muslim leaders as a "joke" saying "nobody follows them" - a description that would fit most of the current crop of Muslim leaders the world over. But where is the alternative?

The "silent majority," which supposedly wants a more liberal leadership, has been silent for so long that one has begun to suspect if it even exists! Time for hand-wringing is over, and the silent majority should do something about it.

For starters, the secular elite needs to get off its high pedestal and start engaging with ordinary Muslims - *not as dispensers of wisdom lecturing* them on their backwardness or problems with Islam but as partners. It is going to be a hard slog, and hands are going to get dirty. But given the stakes, it might be worth trying.

(The Hindu)

CHEAPER BUILDING & CONTENTS INSURANCE

WITH NORWICH UNION

We are the privileged agent for NORWICH UNION for Home Insurance.
We are authorised to issue the policy online. Immediate cover and policy issued on the same day.
We transact Insurance Policy over the phone, no proposal form or Direct Debit Mandate to complete.
We negotiated for choice of FREE Home and Garden package or Sports package or 20% off annual travel
We at ARM can negotiate with NU and provide you the cover to your individual requirements with Special Discount.
We will help you to save hundreds of pounds by transferring your existing Home Insurance to us.
We also provide you the best services from placing the cover to help you to get the maximum benefit, in the event of a claim.

P.SRINIVASAN IFA
PENSION *LIFE *SAVINGS
*MORTGAGES *COMMERCIAL LOANS

ARM ASSOCIATES

FSA Financial Services Authority

TEL: 020 8763 2221
FAX: 020 8763 2220
32 ABBOTS LANE, KENLEY, SURREY CR8 5JH
Internet: http://www.srinivasan.co.uk E-mail: srini@srinivasan.co.uk
REGULATED BY THE FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Principal C E Anandarajan

*(The following is the text of a speech made by **Prof. Nishan Canagarajah** of University of Bristol, UK, before a gathering of the Old Boys Association of St. John's College (Jaffna)in the UK held in September 2005 to felicitate Mr Jeevanantham, a teacher at the College, and to mark the 20th anniversary of the untimely and tragic death of C E Anandarajan, the College Principal.)*

The passing away of Principal C. E. Anandarajan symbolizes the passing away of a tradition of education at St. John's College. For me, personally, it symbolizes the rite of passage into a new world that my generation of Johnians had to pass into. So it is with profound sadness, yet pride, that I speak of my relationship with my Principal.

Since I was too young to remember any of the former Principals of St John's, it was Mr. Anandarajan that I always looked up to for leadership in my college. Though I remember him as a teacher, I had a more personal relationship with him as he was my God Father. It was no coincidence that when I became a prefect in 1984 Mr. Anandarajan was firmly established as the Principal of the school. I was proud to serve under him as I always considered him a Johnian of giant stature. I was looking forward to being mentored by him into my own leadership skills and scholastic excellence. You can imagine the shock my peers and I went through when we saw the person we respected and admired fall at such an early stage of his life and career. I was among the first to rush to Rakka Lane when I heard the tragic news. It was sad for us to see a man with so much potential cut short like that. We couldn't imagine how much we as students and the school in general were going to lose in not having our principal with us. The event left an indelible psychological scar on students of my generation. We woke up into a different world around us. Though we developed a tragic vision of life (that Tamils in general share today), more positively, we also developed values of tolerance, sensitivity, social awareness, and cultural balance.

Though this is a memorial for Principal Anandarajan, I don't want to dwell on the tragic events of his passing away. I want to celebrate the lessons he taught us and leadership he modeled for students of my generation.

Mr. Anandarajan was deeply committed to education. His students remember him as an effective teacher of Chemistry. But his educational commitment went beyond his areas of specialty. Despite his busy schedule, he never lost touch with his students. He took a one hour class every week for A/L students on Current Affairs with topics ranging from politics to history. He realized that Education is not just about passing exams but providing students with skills to be good citizens of the future. My eldest brother tells of a story when he met Mr. Anandarajan on his return from England after his diploma, just before he assumed the Principalship. He told my brother: "I could bring anything from England when I returned home. My friends advised me to bring fancy goods or a new car. Do you know what I brought? I brought books. Because books don't lose their value. Come home and see if you want any books to read." Boarders will remember that Mr. Anandarajan was always seen walking around during the time for Studies. Many students doze off or read comic books kept under the cover of textbooks. But Mr. Anandarajan would check carefully to see that students were not wasting their time. He would frequently advise students to focus on the studies and make good use of their time.

Mr. Anandarajan was foresighted about the cultural changes around us. He recognized the Tamil nationalism that was becoming popular in our community. He was the first Principal to hold School Assemblies in both English and Tamil. He encouraged more of our teachers to give their weekly address in Tamil. His own announcements were both in English and Tamil. Although this was a controversial move at that time, the Principal recognized that the school has to further develop its bilingual identity if it was to be relevant to the changes in the community. He was also among the few Principals who was comfortable either in Verti or a Suit. We remember him coming to Saraswati Pooja festival in his verti on many occasions.

Mr Anandarajan was a man of strong convictions and beliefs. Being a man of outspoken views he did not suppress his opinions. He was not afraid to bring changes which were controversial. During his reign as Principal he started hindu poojas in our schools on Wednesdays while the Christian had their weekly worship in Church. He respected different religions and he encountered much opposition in proposing such a practice within a Christian school. He showed true qualities of a leader who was willing to take tough decisions and carry them through. It is not surprising that he even sacrificed his life because he passionately believed in the independence of the school and would not compromise his views on how the school should be managed.

Mr. Anandarajan was a strict disciplinarian. No student can forget the punishment he has received for lack of discipline at one point or another. I am sure many of us here will have stories to tell about how Mr Anandarajan dealt with our misdemeanors. Even for prefects like me, the political climate in the north was fraught with challenges in disciplining students. If a student who had connections with a militant group was punished, then the fear of revenge outside school was real. It is difficult to imagine the conflicts and challenges Mr Anandarajan must have faced in enforcing strict discipline among students. I am proud to say Mr Anandarajan managed to maintain the highest standards in discipline at one of the most difficult periods in the history of St John's College. What many may not remember is that he was also strict with his fellow teachers. Though many teachers were of his generation and probably went to school with him, Mr. Anandarajan was impartial in applying the rules of the college. People in the boarding remember one boarding master who used to sneak out of the school and come back late in the nights. Because he was the classmate of Mr. Anandarajan he probably thought that the new Principal, his friend,

would be lenient with him. Having heard that the teacher was sometimes missing from the boarding when he was supposed to be around, the Principal once waited for him patiently to return after one of his escapades. The teacher was shocked to see the Principal when he was caught red handed, with the smell of toddy in his breath! The teacher was immediately sent home. He returned from his suspension much chastened, committed to behaving himself, and not testing the resolve of the new Principal. He learnt that Mr. Anandarajan was not going to let his friendship stand in the way of discipline.

Though Mr. Anandarajan gave time for scholastics and discipline, he also managed the administration of the school with great care. People today might say that he had the capacity to micromanage every small detail. I was told the story that when a laborer in the boarding had changed the bulb without permission and without inventorying it, Mr. Anandarajan knew that something was wrong. He knew that a bulb was missing. He then chastised the laborer to follow proper procedures in the future. The students marveled that our Principal was so much in control of school administration that he knew the smallest detail about the college.

Mr Anandarajan's dynamic personality and easy disposition made him a master of any situation. He found pleasure in doing social service. He served not just the school but the Jaffna community through his involvement in the local church as a warden, as a prominent and active member of the Rotary Club, President of the YMCA and a member of the Jaffna Citizens' Committee. He was well known and respected by the Tamil community in the North. This was amply demonstrated at his passing way. Around the time of his death, political assassinations were common place and dissent against such killings was rare. Mr Anandarajan's assassination, however, drew widespread condemnation from Jaffna citizens. The next day, black flags were hung in several streets and on shop doors, which was very unusual at that time. Mr Anandarajan commanded so much respect in the community that the following day Jaffna's Regional Director of Education agreed to close schools in Jaffna for 24 hours to mourn the principal's death.

Though his tenure was brief, Mr. Anandarajan has left an indelible impression on the students and teachers who knew him. As Abraham Lincoln once said, *I do the very best I know how - the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing so until the end.* We are thankful to have known and studied under Principal Anandarajan who has served his alma mater from his youngest days as a student until the very end as the Principal. This loyal commitment to our school and community is worthy of emulation for all of us gathered here this evening. ❑

NEWS TRACK

Tamil journalist assaulted: Aug 24 - Mr.Yathurshan Premachchandran, a photojournalist of Colombo Tamil daily "Sudar Oli" was handed over to the Fort Police in Colombo after being allegedly assaulted by a group of JVP activists Tuesday (23) afternoon around 4:00 p.m. The journalist was assisting his senior journalist in covering a JVP demonstration held in front of Fort Railway Station. Sudar Oli authorities reportedly immediately made representation to the Fort Police to release Mr.Yathurshan Premachchandran, as he has been a trainee who accompanied a senior journalist of their institution to this event.

Premachchandran was produced by the police before the Fort Magistrate on 24 August The police informed court that the policemen at the scene of incident took Mr. Premachchandran into custody to rescue him from a group of persons who were attacking him adding that they needed time to conduct investigation into the assault and to apprehend the suspects who had assaulted the journalist, The Magistrate ordered his release on bail.

TNA delegation meets UK envoy: Aug 24 - A Tamil National Alliance parliamentary delegation Wednesday (24) morning met with Mr. Stephen Evans, British High Commissioner in Colombo and exchanged views on the proposed talks between the Government and the LTTE regarding the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, current position of the P-TOMS following the Supreme Court's interim order, the urgency of establishing the Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) and the future political scenario in the south which is expected to be followed with the order of the Supreme Court on the presidential election date controversy, according to a TamilNet report.

The TNA delegation briefed the UK envoy that the international community should formulate a new plan to ensure the distribution of relief and assistance reach the north-east to rehabilitate and resettle the hundred of thousands of displaced Tamil people in the two decade old war in their own areas.

The discussion, which last for about an hour, was held at the UK High Commissioner's office. Mr. Wilson, European Union envoy in Sri Lanka associated in the discussion with British High Commissioner. TNA delegation comprised parliamentarians Mr.R.Sampanthan, Mr.Jospeh Pararajasingham, Mr.Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam and Mr.Selvam Adaikalanathan.

PLOTE supporter killed in Vavuniya: Aug 25 - Unidentified gunmen shot and killed Mr. Rajaratnam Sreekanathan, 58, suspected to be a supporter of the Tamil group, PLOTE. The killing took place at his residence on 3rd lane at Kovilkulam, four kilometers southeast of Vavuniya town around 10:30 p.m. Wednesday (25). The gunmen shot Sreekanathan who was inside his house through a window using a handgun, according to the police. PLOTE blamed the LTTE for the killing

Two men from Batticaloa kidnapped: 26 Aug - Unidentified persons riding a white van without number-plate kidnapped two civilians from Batticaloa in Colombo Thursday (26) night around 11:00 p.m. The victims, Mr. Kandiah Sasikumar, 22 and Mr. Kathamuthu Nallathamby, 40, were kidnapped on Colombo-Negombo road when they were on their way from Banadaranaike

International Airport with their relatives who had come from abroad, a TamilNet report said.

The victims who were from Santhiveli in Batticaloa were stopped by the same group of persons when they were on their way to airport to pick up their relatives. The group of four men had let them go after a "security check". However, when they were returning from the airport, the same group wanted to check them again and kidnapped the two persons, according to the relatives. The kidnappers had told the relatives, the sister and mother of one of the victims, that they were being taken for further inquiries, the TamilNet report said.

Two children, woman injured in bomb attack: Aug 28 - Two children, a six year-old-boy, a nine-year-old girl and a 28 year old woman were injured when unidentified attackers lobbed a grenade into a house in Thimilathivu, a suburb of Batticaloa, Saturday (27) night around 8:30 p.m. The six-year-old boy, Navaratnarajah Jegatheeswaran (Vinoth) in a serious condition was transferred to Colombo Hospital from Batticaloa Hospital.

Two unidentified men who approached the house in a motorbike lobbed a grenade into the house belonging to Mr. Kirupalan. The injured victims were from the neighbourhood, watching Television in the house.The other two persons injured in the attack are, Ms. Yogeswaran Gajenthini, 9, and Ms. Srishanthimathy Uthayarajah (Vijeyatharsini), 28, are admitted at Batticaloa Hospital.

Shot and killed in Trincomalee: Aug 28 - Unidentified gunmen shot and killed Mr. Warnakulasooriya John Silva, 75 year-old Sinhalese in Thampalakamam Saturday (27) night at 8:50 p.m. He was running a shop selling pots of curd in the area. He succumbed to gunshot injuries while being taken to Kantalai government hospital. The victim was shot at his house located on Trincomalee-Kantalai Road about 24 km off south west of Trincomalee town.

Reportedly "unidentified gunmen" had warned Mr. Warnakulasooriya on several previous occasions for passing information to security forces, Police said blaming the Tamil Tigers for the killing.

Bodies with gunshot injuries recovered: Aug 29 - Bodies of two youths with gunshot injuries were found in the shrub jungle close to Arupola Kanda in Thepuwana in Kalutara district, south of Colombo. The victims were about five feet and six inches in height and were wearing denim trousers and colored shirts, Thepuwana Police said. Mr.Chandrananda Bambaranda, OIC, Thepuwana Police said the victims had been first tortured and shot dead. Thereafter their bodies had been brought in a vehicle and dumped at the site. The bodies are now lying in the Nagoda hospital for identification, police said.

Tamil paper targeted: On Monday 29 August, unidentified attackers lobbed two grenades into the paper's printing office at Madampitiya Road at. Grandpass in Colombo. A security guard, Mr. David Selvaratnam, 50, who was injured in the attack, succumbed to his wounds at Colombo Hospital. Mr. Manickam Kamalanathan, 49, a proof reader, Mr. Subramaniyam Suthas, 29, a computer operator and Mr. A.M.F Anas, a visitor from Deepam TV channel, were also injured in the attack, TamilNet reported. Editorial staff working in the office at the time of attack escaped unhurt. The security post of the office was severely damaged. Windows of the office and the stationeries inside the building are also damaged. A van and a car in the vicinity were also damaged.

Two weeks previously, unidentified men lobbed two grenades into the branch office of the Suderoli in Wellawatte, a predominantly Tamil suburb of Colombo. The grenades failed to explode. Later, the police cordoned off the area and a bomb disposal squad removed those grenades and defused them at a beach front in Wellawatte.

Free Media Movement (FMM) spokesman Mr. Sunanda Desapriya said that his organisation strongly condemned the attack on the journalist. "Free Media Movement strongly condemns this undemocratic behavior of JVP supporters as well as the incessant hate speeches made by the party leaders against political opponents at public rallies. This is not the behaviour of a democratic political party but of an extremist party which does not accept diversity," the press release issued by the FMM said.

One dead, three injured in Vaharai: Aug 30 - An LTTE cadre, Mr. Reagon, was killed and three persons including two civilians were injured when an unidentified group of men, who had moved into the LTTE held area Kirimichchai in Vaharai, shot at LTTE cadres and civilians. The attack took place around 10:00 a.m. Tuesday (30) morning. According to LTTE officials in Sampoor in Trincomalee, the attackers used claymore mine and shot at LTTE cadres. The also accused the army of involvement in the attack.

Meanwhile, LTTE Peace Secretariat in a news release said that the Sri Lankan Armed forces had moved 500 meters into the LTTE administered area in Kirumichchai. Kirimichchai is located 49 km. north of Batticaloa. Batticaloa political office of the LTTE has filed a formal complaint to the SLMM district office in Batticaloa, LTTE Peace Secretariat said. In the meantime, Army sources while rejecting the allegation of their involvement claimed to local reporters that seven LTTE cadres were killed and six cadres were injured in the attack.

Four soldiers, policeman, civilian injured: Aug 31 - Four soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA), a policeman and a civilian were injured in three separate incidents that took place Wednesday (31) morning in Batticaloa district. They were injured in grenade attack and firing by unidentified men, Police sources said while blaming the LTTE for the incidents. All the incidents were reported on Batticaloa-Valaichenai highway within 17 km distance between Eravur and Valaichenai. Security was being beefed up by the Sri Lanka Army and Police following the attacks along the highway.

According to a TamilNet report, in the first incident in Batticaloa on Wednesday, two unidentified attackers riding a motorbike lobbed a grenade into a bunker at the entrance of the 232 Detachment of the Sri Lanka Army which is located at Mavadivembu in Eravur. Two soldiers, Nimal Jeyathilake and M.J. Weeraratne, injured in the grenade attack, Police said. Also, a civilian Mr. M. Dissanayake, who was driving a lorry at that

time, was injured in the attack. The driver is admitted to Batticaloa Hospital. Eravur Police is conducting investigations.

The second incident took place at Cobra junction of Valaichchenai at 8:30 a.m. Two unidentified men lobbed grenade at a group of soldiers riding in an army truck to supply meal to the soldiers in the area. Two soldiers, Mr. Santha, 20, and Mr. Herath, 25, were injured in the incident. SLA soldiers opened fire for more than ten minutes following in the attack. Injured soldiers were rushed to Polannaruwa hospital. Valaichenai police is conducting investigations into the attack.

One policeman injured in the third incident when unidentified lobbed grenade and fired at police personnel. This incident took place at Santhiveli junction in Eravur Wednesday morning around 10 am.

LTTE launches civil defence force: Aug 31 - Hundred-and-twenty persons passed out in the first batch of special trained village level civil force in Ganeshapuram Central Grounds on Tuesday Aug 30) in LTTE controlled Muttur East in the Trincomalee district. LTTE's Special Commander of Trincomalee, Col. Sornam, particiapted as the chief guest in the passing out ceremony of the first batch that completed a forty-five days' training. Deputy Head of the Tamileelam Police for the Trincomalee district, Mr. Semmanan, who presided at the event said that training was being given to five thousand villagers in the district.

He added the government signed the ceasefire agreement with the LTTE, because of the military strength of the LTTE. To sustain the current peace environment and to establish permanent peace, the military strength of the LTTE and the Tamil people should be protected and enhanced, he added. Hence the induction of newly trained personnel of the village level special trained force.

Col. Sornam, in his keynote address said that the LTTE was able to defeat the Sri Lanka Army when the latter launched Jayasikuru military operation in the Vanni region with the support of the militarily trained civil force in Vanni.

Two more gunfire incidents in east: Aug 31 - Sri Lankan Army soldiers patrolling the streets in Valaichenai and Kiran were fired upon by unidentified attackers in two separate incidents Wednesday (31) noon. The shooting incidents were reported on Pethalai Road in Valaichenai, 39 km north of Batticaloa town and at Korakallimadu, a hamlet near Kiran. SLA soldiers opened fire following the gunfire by the unidentified attackers. Casualty figures were not immediately available.

Earlier on Wedensday, four SLA soldiers were injured in three different shooting incidents on Batticaloa-Valaichenai highway. SLA increased patrolling after the incidents. SLA soldiers are conducting search operations in Valaichenai and Kiran following the gunfire incidents.

US sniffer dogs for de-mining unit in Jaffna: Aug 31 - The USA government Tuesday (31) handed 7 trained sniffer dogs to the De-Mining Unit of the Sri Lanka Army, which is stationed in the Palaly military base in Jaffna district. SLA troops have begun deploying these sniffer dogs to detect mines in the Avarankal east area. Mr. Evan William Owen, Political Officer of the US Embassy in Colombo and Mr. Perry F.Ballimore of the Marshal Leashky Institute in the USA, which handles the training of sniffer dogs, participated in the handing over event. Security was beefed up in the area where the US diplomats visited.

Fake LTTE gang arrested: Aug 31 - A six-member gang comprising Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims were remanded in custody till September 7 after they were arrested for allegedly trying to extort one million rupees from a Colombo businessman posing as LTTE cadres.

The CID told the Colombo Magistrate Courts that the arrests were made following investigations into a complaint lodged by a Colombo businessman Thevraj Thavakumaran. The CID said according to Mr. Thavakumaran, on August 8, he was handed an anonymous letter bearing the letterhead of the LTTE, ordering him to deposit one million rupees to a savings account at a private bank.

Shortly after receiving the letter, he had received a call from a person identifying himself as 'Shankar Raja'. He had warned him of death if he did not deposit the money. The CID had then traced the bank account to arrest the suspects.

They said they had recovered a number of counterfeit documents bearing the LTTE symbol and further investigations were being conducted to verify if the same group was responsible for similar extortion incidents throughout the country.

The CID said two people who had prepared these forged documents had also been nabbed.

Tamil resurgence event in Kilinochchi: Sep 1 - Around one hundred thousand people from various parts of Vanni mainland took part in the Tamil national resurgence event held in Kilinochchi on Thursday. The event was held in support of the July 27 Vavuniya Convention and was organised by the Tamil Resurgence Task Force. The entire township was decorated with felicitation arches and yellow and red bi-colour flags with a festive appearance. "This event would inform the world that time is ripe for us to decide our own destiny," Mr. M. Sivabalan, president of the Task Force, according to a TamilNet report.

Ms. Thamilchelvi Shanmuganathan, wife of Maj. Wimal, an LTTE fighter died in the war with the Sri Lankan forces and Mr. Muttusamy Arunachalam, father of Major Kamal who died in the war with the Indian IPKF forces, lit the traditional oil lamp. Mr. Muthuvel Seevaratnam, father of LTTE's Capt. Vannan who died in the war with the Indian forces hoisted the Thamileelam national flag.

Two arrested with weapons: Sep 1 - Two LTTE suspects travelling in three wheeler in the Pamankade area of Colombo were arrested in a search operation by the forces at 5.30 p.m. on 30 August. The two men identified as Mohamed Irsath and Mohamed Rilfan are alleged to have in their possession a 9 MM pistol with 8 bullets and a 3.8 revolver with 2 bullets. Both of them were handed over to the Wellawatte police and remanded for further investigations.

Rental charged for freely donated fishing gear: Sep 1 – It is reported that the fishing gear donated by NECORD to those engaged in fresh water fishing in Parapakandal and Sirukanda in

Mannar in north Sri Lanka were. confiscated by the LTTE which later redistributed the very same fishing gear by organizing a function to do so at the Sirukanda School by the Treasurer of the LTTE Karikalan. Karikalan said that the fishing gear was provided by Fishermen Society and everyone who received fishing gear should pay rental of Rs.1,700 to the society. Fishermen of the area complained that the LTTE is not only claiming ownership for the fishing gear given free by NECORD but plans to extort the money paid to the society by fishermen.

Tamil businessman shot and killed: Sep 2 - Unidentified gunmen shot and killed Mr.Naguleswaran, 37, a tile factory owner at his residence in Wennapuwa, a town in Chilaw district in the North Western Province, around 8:30 a.m., Friday (2), police said. Three gunmen had entered his residence Friday morning shot Mr. Naguleswaran, the owner of Fatima Tile Factory in Lunuwila, located in Wennapuwa police division. Naguleswaran was rushed to Negombo general hospital, but was pronounced dead before admission, Police said.

According to the police, the victim Kanakathipillai Naguleshwaran of Kalmunai, who was a strong supporter of the Karuna faction of the LTTE, was employed in a tile factory in Bolawatte from April this year. Initial investigations indicated that the victim had defected from the Karuna group some months ago and moved to Wennappuwa for safety. However, two suspected Wanni cadres belonging to the LTTE's pistol ganf shot him dead in Bolawatte and fled the scene in the vehicle they came in.

STS

S.T.S Travels & Tours Ltd

Tel: 0208 544 1919 Fax: 0208 544 1920

Email: ststravel@hotmail.com

Specialising in:

a) Worldwide Discounted Flights (scheduled).

b) Quality **Hajj Packages** starting from **£1599.00** in 5* accommodations.

c) Economy Dubai Packages

Please call us to avail discounted rates on major airlines especially to Indian Sub-continent.

We will never be beaten on price or service.

Open seven days a week till late

Emergency contact 07940 728745

RETAILS AGENTS FOR ATOL HOLDERS

Man abducted and hacked to death: Sept 2 - Uppuveli police have found the body of L.V.Pradeep Kumara (30) of Sirimapura, Trincomalee who had been abducted and slashed to death. He was an active member of the "Organisation to protect people of Trincomalee" formed in order to protect the Buddha Statue in Trincomalee town and against LTTE activities. The victim had been killed close to the Varodayanagar water tank in Selvangampura in Uppuveli police division. At the time the body was found, the mouth had been tied with a black cloth and the face covered with a T shirt. His hands and feet were also tied.

The abduction had taken place in the morning at about 5.30 when the victim had come on a motor cycle in Ganesh Lane to go fishing. The motor cycle had been set on fire after he was killed. Father of the victim, Gunapala had told the police that his son had served in the army for some time. The LTTE had threatened him on hearing about the killing. Police Police suspect that the killing is the work of the LTTE with the objective of creating communal dissension.

SLMC seeks autonomous unit: Sept 3 - The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) has sought an assurance from the ruling party and the opposition that the community would be given an autonomous Muslim-majority administrative unit in the LTTE-dominated Eastern Province. Rauf Hakeem, the SLMC chief, told the press that this condition was put to the United National Party's presidential candidate, Ranil Wickremesinghe, and would also be conveyed to the ruling party's candidate, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse, next week. "We will be meeting Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse to speak about long-neglected issues concerning Muslims." the SLMC leader

Police constable, civilian injured in gunfire: Sep 3 - Unidentified gunmen fired at the office of the Kalmunai Assistant Superintendent of Police around 8:55 p.m., Saturday (3) seriously wounding a police constable. A woman was injured when the policemen opened fire at the gunmen. The injured police constable, Mr. K. Gamini, was rushed to Kalmunai Ashraff Memorial Hospital, Police said. The office of Kalmunai ASP is located on Resthouse Road in Kalmunai town, 500 meters from the Kalmunai Police station. Kalmunai is located 39 km south of Batticaloa.

LTTE office attacked, one cadre killed: Sep 4 - Mr. K. Arulnesan, a political cadre of the Liberation Tigers was killed when unidentified men lobbed grenades and fired at the LTTE office located in Kaluwanchikuddy town around 7:00 a.m. Sunday (4). Three LTTE political cadres narrowly escaped from the office. Arulnesan's body with 9 gunshot wounds was taken to Kaluwanchikudy Hospital by the Police and later handed over to LTTE. The LTTE office, which was also subjected to a hand grenade attack one month ago, is located on Kaluwanchikudy main road. Kaluwanchikudy town is located 30 km south of Batticaloa.

Four men riding in two motorbikes with T-56 rifles lobbed grenadeds into the office as they approached the building and fired at random. Later, they entered the office following the

attack and burnt down the documents and furniture inside the office.

SLA convoy attacked in Eravur: Sep 4 - Unidentified gunmen attacked a Sri Lanka Army convoy on Santhiveli highway in Eravur around 5:30 p.m. Sunday (4). Heavy gunfire is reported at the site. All transport on the highway had come to a halt.

Santhiveli is located 21 km north of Batticaloa. The police blamed the LTTE for the attack.

Grenade lobbed on soldiers, civilian injured: Sep 4 - Two unidentified attackers riding a motorbike lobbed a grenade into a Sri Lanka Army sentry post in Kalliyankadu, near Batticaloa Railway station, 2 km off Batticaloa town Sunday (4) evening around 5:45 p.m. Four SLA soldiers narrowly escaped from the attack. A 14-year old boy who was walking along the street sustained shrapnel wounds, Police said blaming the LTTE for the attack. Two weeks ago, on August 20, one SLA soldier was wounded when unidentified men attacked the checkpoint. The injured boy, Mr. Nadesalingam Krishnakanth, 14, a resident of the 1st cross street in Batticaloa, was rushed to Batticaloa Hospital, sources said.

Police sentry attacked in Kalmunai: Sep 4 - Unidentified gunmen fired at a Sri Lankan Police checkpost at Pandiriuppu in Kalmunai, 39 km south of Batticaloa. The attackers and the policemen exchanged gunfire for 15 minutes, Police said. No casualties were reported in the clash.

The incident took place at Thalawettuwan junction in Batticaloa - Kalmunai Road, around 300 meters from Kalmunai Police station. The police blamed the LTTE for the attack.

Jaffna University expands: Sep 4 - Faculty of Agriculture of the Jaffna University is to be established in 400-acre land, which is allocated at Ponnagar in Killinochchi district. The foundation-laying event for the project will held on 6 September, said Professor C.Mohanathas, Vice Chancellor of the Jaffna University.

Professor C.Mohanathas further said the foundation stone would be laid for the new building complex of the Vavuniya Campus of the Jaffna University on 10 September at Pampaimadu in Vavuniya district. About 160 acres of land has been allocated for this project. In the first phase students' hostels, and other infrastructure facilities will be constructed at a cost of 30 million rupees, he said.

Professor C.Mohanathas added that the University Grants Commission (UGC) has allocated 700 million rupees for the next year to construct necessary buildings and purchase equipments urgently needed for the university and its Vavuniya campus.

Grenade attack on Police sentry: Sep 4 - Two unidentified men riding a motorbike on Pottuvil - Kalmunai road lobbed a grenade at a police checkpost near Akkaraipattu Police station in Amparai district Sunday at 9:30 p.m., police said. No one was injured in the attack. Akkaraipattu is located 64 km south of Batticaloa.

Grenade misses EPDP building: Sep 5 – A grenade lobbed by unidentified men targeting the Mannar district office of the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) Monday (5) early morning hit the house of a civilian located adjacent to the EPDP office. The front portion of the house was badly damaged. Mr.Innasimuthu Benedict, a retired prison official is the owner of the damaged house. At that time of attack, three women were in the house, Police said.

A police team led by Superintendent of Police Mr.Tennekon rushed to site and inspected the damaged house. A member of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) based in Mannar also visited the site. The EPDP and the police blamed the Tamil Tigers for the attack.

Soldier dead, two injured in grenade attack: Sep 5 - Unidentified men riding in motorbikes lobbed a grenade and fired at three Sri Lanka Army soldiers in Chenkalady around 5:00 p.m. Monday (5). The three SLA soldiers, who were on duty on Batticaloa-Chenkalady road sustained serious injuries in the attack. One of the soldiers, SLA Corporal R. P. Banadra, 35, later succumbed to his wounds at Batticaloa hospital, Eravur Police said. One of the injured soldiers was located later far away from the spot following the attack, sources added. The other two soldiers, R. P. R. Rajapaksa, 28, and R.P. Pathmasri, 30, are being treated at Polannaruwa Hospital, sources said. The injured soldiers were rushed to Chenkalady Hospital and later transferred to Batticaloa Hospital and to Polannaruwa Hospital.

The attack, for which the police blamed the Tamil Tigers, took place near Chenkalady public market Traffic along the main road came to a halt following the grenade attack and tension prevailed in Chenkalady, civilian sources said. Chenkalady is located 15 km north of Batticaloa.

In the other incident, three soldiers who were returning to their base after supplying tea to fellow soldiers came under attack. The LTTE attackers lobbed a grenade at the soliders who were riding in a three-wheeler and shot at them. Two soldiers, Anurudda Kumara and Gunadasa WGuruge, were seriously injured in the attack. The three soldiers in critical state were airlifted to Polannaruwa hospital.

Attacks in eastern province stepped up: Sep 6 - The LTTE has stepped up attacks on security forces in the eastern province, defense officials said Tuesday (6). During the 24 hour period between 5 p.m. local time Sunday(4) and 5:00 p.m. Monday (5) as many as eight separate attacks were carried out against the forces. The attacks attributed the Tamil Tigers resulted in two deaths of soldiers and three injuries.

The police in the eastern province said that two more attacks took place in the province Monday night. At around 7:30 p.m. local time (1330 GMT) a police post at Sammanthurai in the Ampara district was attacked while at 8:30 p.m. another police post at Maruthamunai on Batticaloa - Kalmunai road was attacked. Hand grenades were thrown at each police post but there were no casualties.

Three LTTE cadres killed, five injured: Sep 6 - Three Tamil Tiger cadres were killed when a group of armed men wearing military fatigues raided a sentry post at Kattumurivu inside LTTE controlled Vaharai area Tuesday (6) morning around 8:45

a.m. Five cadres were injured in the raid, according to LTTE officials in Sampoor. It is reported that 700 rounds of ammunition, a 40 mm grenade launcher, four T-56 rifles, ten grenades, two claymore mines and three LTTE uniform kits were captured by the attackers, who reportedly belonged to the Karuna faction. The clash had taken place in an area near the LTTE's four-six base, one of the largest in the eastern region. After the clash, the Karuna cadres had set the camp ablaze before fleeing, he said.

A TamilNet report identified the LTTE cadres killed in the raid as: Mr. Sutharalingam Sinnarasa (Vinoth) from Iralkuli, Muttur, Mr. Pathmanathan Senthuran (Sarangan) from 6th Mile Post, Periyankulam, Nilaveli and Mr. Nagaratnam Sivathasan (Siva), Athiyamman Kovil Road, Kiliveddy.

STF raids LTTE offices in Amparai: Sep 6 - Soldiers of the Special Task Force (STF), the elite counter insurgency arm of the Sri Lanka armed forces, entered the LTTE's offices in Pandiruppu and Navithanveli in Kalmumai in Amparai district Tuesday(6) evening. STF soldiers arrived at the LTTE political office located at Pandiruppu on Batticaloa-Kalmunai Road in a convoy of six army trucks from the STF base in Karathivu and cordoned off the office premises in Pandiruppu aroud 2:00 p.m. before entering the building. STF soldiers also cordoned off and seized the documents inside LTTE political office in Navithanveli, sources said.

Motor & Home Insurance

All Classes of Insurance Transacted
At Very Competitive Rates
Young Drivers Specialists
Special Rates for Ladies/Mature Drivers

● Building ● Fire Liability
● Shop/Office ● Health Insurance

MEMBER
Instalment Terms Available
Computerised Quotes
J. Kulendran General Insurance STANDARDS COUNCIL
Regulated by the FSA Financial Services Authority

Beddington Insurance Services
(Wimbledon) Limited
157A, Hartfield Road, Wimbledon,
London SW19 3TJ.
Tel: 020 8543 5181
Fax: 020 8543 7158
We Excel in The Personal Service We Provide

Bullet riddled bodies of Tamil youths found: Sep 6 - The bodies of two Tamil youths Mr. Kirupairasa Rupanraj, 23, and Mr. Muthuvel Jegatheeswaran, 19, natives of Almkerny, Kinniya division in Trincomalee district were recovered with gunshot injuries Tuesday (6) morning by Ragama Police in Western Province. The two youths were abducted Monday night around 10 p.m. from Ragama, northeast of Colombo. The victims were beaten, cut, and shot. The hands of the victims were tied up with rope and chains, and the eyes were blindfolded at the time bodies were recovered.

According to preliminary investigation, a seven-member gang came in a white colored Hi-Ace van took these youths from the factory stating that they were needed for interrogation, sources said. The youths had been working in a plastic factory owned by a Muslim businessman in Enderamulla in Wattala police division. Mr. Rupenraj was working in the factory for over a year, and Mr. Jegatheeswaran joined at the factory 6 months ago. The bodies of the victims were found dumped in a paddy field in Kurunthalawa Ginihinda area 6 km away from the factory where they were kidnapped.

Two kidnapped and killed: Sept 7 - Two youths suspected by police to be linked to LTTE intelligence operations and working at a plastics factory in Enderamulla in the outskirts of Colombo were forcibly taken and killed at Ragama on Monday (5) night by an unidentified gang who posed as police.

The victims identified as Tirupan Rajah (19) and Muttuwelu Jegadeegan (23) were forcibly taken away by a gang of seven that had stormed the plastics factory around 9.30 pm. The gang claiming to be policemen in civies had told the factory owner the two youths were wanted for questioning, police said. One of the gang was reportedly clad in a police uniform and carrying a gun. The bullet riddled bodies of the two youths were found tied to a tree trunk in Kurukulawa area in Ragama. Police said latest investigations revealed that the two youths from Kinniya might have had connections with the LTTE intelligence wing and the killers might have some connection to the Karuna faction.

Attack on SLA sentry injures two civilians: Sept 7 – Suspected Tamil Tigers lobbed grenades at a sentry point of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) located at Mudcove junction, a suburb in Trincomalee town along Mattikali road, Tuesday (6) night around 9.45 p.m. Soldiers manning the sentry point retaliated the attack. A Hindu priest, Mr.Uruthirakurukkal Aravinthakumar (35), and his assistant, Mr.Sivagnanam, who were passing at that time on a motorbike were injured during the incident and were admitted to the Trincomalee general hospital, police said. Mr.Aravinthakumar who was on the wheel with his assistant on pillion without stopping at the scene of incident had rushed to the Uppuveli Police and made a complaint. Thereafter the Uppuveli Police had taken the victims to the Trincomalee general hospital in their vehicle.

Policeman injured in grenade attack: Sept 7 - Unidentified persons lobbed a grenade and fired at a police sentry post at Sinnappodai near Kallady bridge wounding a police constable attached to Batticaloa police station, Police said. The incident took place around 12:45 p.m. Sinnappodai is located 2 km east

of Batticaloa. The police constable, Mr. Ranjithkumara Kulasingha, 41, was seriously injured and was rushed to Batticaloa Hospital. The police blamed the LTTE for the attack.

Youth shot and killed following grenade attack: Sept 8 - A Tamil man identified as Mr. Sinnathamby Baleswaran, 38, from Kurinchamunai in Kokkaddicholai, was shot and killed by the police when they returned fire following a grenade attack at a police post located in Urani junction on Batticaloa-Valaichenai Road, 3 km north of Batticaloa town. An SLA corporal, Mr. M. D. Somasri, 32, was seriously wounded and three police constables sustained minor injuries when unidentified attackers lobbed a grenade at the police post around 6:30 p.m. Wednesday (7).

Police also arrested youth who is alleged to have taken part in the attack and he has been identified as Mr. Singaratnam Kamalchandran, 34, was from Mamangam in Batticaloa. Police claimed that a handgun and a grenade were recovered from the persons and alleged that the victim and the arrested youth were cadres belonged to LTTE.

Bomb scare kills one in Katunayake airport: Sept 8 - One woman was killed and more than 60 passengers were injured in a stampede inside an aircraft at the Bandaranaike International Airport on Thursday following panic reaction to a bomb-threat on the commercial flight. The Saudi Arabian flight to Jeddah was readying for take-off when the airport received a phone call about the bomb-threat. Subsequent searches on the flight proved the call to be a hoax. However, in the confusion that prevailed, passengers rushed to the emergency exits, which were opened, and jumped off the aircraft. The injuries were sustained during the stampede to the exits and when the passengers jumped out, media reports said.

STF soldiers and policeman killed in two attacks: Sept 8 - Two Sri Lankan armed personnel were killed, five Special Task Forces soldiers and five civilians were injured in two separate clashes when suspected LTTE gunmen attacked STF soldiers and policemen who were monitoring the Batticaloa - Kalmunai Road in Manmunai, 7 km south of Batticaloa between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. Thursday (8). The first incident was at Manmunai where armed men lobbed a grenade and fired at the STF and police personnel on Batticaloa - Kalmunai Road. At least one policeman was wounded in the attack. The second attack occured at 5:45 p.m. on Mariyamman Kovil Road where a group of attackers lobbed a grenade into an STF vehicle carrying soldiers and policemen who were returning to Manmunai STF camp from Thalankudah.

Two STF soldiers, Mr. M. S. Santhana, 30, and Mr. M. L. Amarasingha, 32, were killed. Five STF soldiers, Mr. R. Wijesundara, 35, Mr. W. Rupasinghe, 33, Mr. M. L. Rosantha, 30, Mr. S. M. Karis, 32, and Mr. W. P. Kulasekara, 30, were severely injured. At least 5 civilians including a van driver from Amparai, Mr. S. Samankumar, 40, and Mr. A. L. Herath, 35, were injured in the attack.

Karuna's cadre dies in police gunfire: Sept 8 - A cadre from Karuna Group was shot and killed by police while he was engaged in a clash with a Liberation Tiger cadre Thursday (8) morning around 10:00 a.m. The incident took place at Boundary Road Junction near Mamangam temple, 2 km east of Batticaloa town. However, initial reports from the Police said that the policemen, upon hearing gunshots, reached the site and shot at Karuna's armed men who were fleeing from the scene. One person died and another was rushed to Batticaloa Hospita with injuriesl. A pistol was recovered from the dead cadre, according to the police.

Grenade attack on sentry post: Sept 8 – Two suspected LTTE attackers riding a motorbike lobbed a grenade at the Sri Lanka Army sentry post located near the Batticaloa Railway station at Kalliyankadu in Batticaloa. The incident took place Thursday (8) around 7:30 p.m. Four SLA soldiers who were on duty, narrowly escaped from the attack, Police said. The sentry post at Kalliyankadu has been subjected to grenade attack for the fourth time within a period of five weeks.

Two army intelligence officers killed: Sept 9 - Suspected Tamil Tiger gunmen shot and killed Mr. Mohammed Rafeek, 41, at 2nd Cross Street in Vavuniya at 11:10 a.m. Friday (9). The victim, Mr. Rafeek, is from Modera in Colombo and was on a personal errand in Vavuniya when he was shot several times at point blank range by two gunmen on a motorbike. The victim had fallen óff the push cycle he was riding while the assailants managed to escape. The dead body of the Mr Rafeek was recovered by Vavuniya Police with nine gunshot wounds. Vavuniya District judge, Mr. Manickavasagar Ilancheliyan visited the site and ordered the Police to conduct investigations into the killing. The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission was informed of the incident. The Army said the micro pistol, the weapon used in the shooting was of a type commonly used by the LTTE and they have strong reason to believe that the LTTE pistol gang members carried out the act.

In the other incident on the same day, an army intelligence officer identified as Gopal Vilvarasa aka Kethees (45) of the Army Intelligence Unit, was gunned down allegedly by the LTTE's pistol gang at 11.40 am Friday (9) in Thirunavatkulam in Vavuniya district, police in Vavuniya said. He was a former PLOTE member who later joined the army. Gopal was working inside his residence on the Second Cross Street when he was gunned down by two LTTE pistol gang cadres who came riding a bicycle. Selvarajah Parthipan, a teacher at a Vavuniya Private Educational Institute was seriously injured during the incident. Parthipan was initially admitted to the Vavuniya General Hospital and later transferred to Colombo, as his injuries were serious, hospital sources said.

Two Karunacadres killed: Sept 11 - Welikanda police on Sunday (11)located dead bodies of two cadres belonging to Karuna group in Karapola, a Tamil village in the interior of Polannaruwa district, around 65 kilometers northwest of Batticaloa.

The dead bodies with gunshot wounds were found near Karapola road. One body was found 50 meters away from the other. The victims were identified as Mr. K. Uthayakumar, 19, from Sithandy in Eravur and Mr. M. Muraltharan, 21, from Karapola in Welikande. ❑

Tigers strengthen 'homeland security'

Aug 31 - The LTTE is building a citizens' militia that can provide a measure of protection for their own villages, particularly against Army-backed irregulars, and could be drafted into relief efforts in the wake of natural disasters.

As Sri Lanka's conflict shifted from largely a guerrilla war to a conventional one, the Liberation Tigers have become increasingly aware of an important lack in their state-building strategy. That gap was glaringly exposed in the immediate aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami: at times of crisis, the LTTE's cadres simply cannot be everywhere at the same time. The gradual disintegration of the Norwegian peace process and recent tsunami scares have spurred an age old solution: a citizens' militia.

When the huge waves smashed into the northern, eastern and southern coastlines on December 26, they not only annihilated entire communities, but also destroyed roads and bridges, cut communications and overwhelmed local authorities' capacities.

By quickly mobilising its military machine – particularly its naval forces - and deploying its entire fighting strength alongside its relief, police and other civil administration arms, the LTTE was able to rescue tens of thousands, treat the many wounded, prevent the spread of disease and organise relief assistance for the homeless.

But key lessons were learnt. Had the waves struck amid an ongoing war and the LTTE's forces deployed in combat operations, the casualties would have been much worse. And after the immediate rescue effort, the subsequent relief efforts - which tied up large numbers of LTTE troops - might have been untenable.

These realisations have occurred against a background of another concern. From the outset, the conflict has been characterised by atrocities and abuses against civilians. Numerous massacres and mass arrests and disappearance of Tamil civilians by Sri Lanka's predominantly Sinhala armed forces, particularly in the nineties, have contributed to the terrorising of the populace, as have frequent incidents of torture and rape in military custody.

As Tamil guerrillas grew in numbers and acquired greater firepower, Sri Lanka's armed forces ability to range freely became increasingly curtailed. Civilian deaths in areas LTTE-controlled areas were mainly caused by aerial and artillery bombardment, and the effects of embargo. In areas controlled by the military – particularly recently captured from the LTTE - however, the population was vulnerable to arrest and summary executions, torture and rape. The abuses in Jaffna after its capture in 1995 – as typified by the rape and murder of Krishanthi Kumaraswamy and her family – are a case in point.

The shift from guerrilla war to conventional war, meanwhile, resulted in the increasing concentration of forces by both sides. In the late nineties, for example, the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) massed its key fighting divisions (in Jaffna and Vavuniya) to invade the LTTE-held Vanni. As a result, the Tigers were also compelled to do the same. In concentrate their forces for decisive battles, both sides were compelled to leave territory they controlled elsewhere weakly defended. In the mid-nineties, the SLA moved large numbers of troops from the eastern provinces to Jaffna for the peninsula's capture, enabling the LTTE to take over large swathes of territory in Batticaloa.

But the SLA's ability to hold other parts of the eastern province whilst massing its troops in the north was enhanced by its raising in the preceding years of tens of thousands of 'Home Guards.' Drawn from Sinhala colonies and Muslim villages in the Northeast, the Home Guards comprised a comparatively lightly armed, yet effective militia. Apart from providing local security in some Army-controlled areas, they constituted a first line of defence against LTTE incursions, enabling the limited SLA forces to provide a mobile response in the event of major clashes. Across the eastern province, and especially in the contested colonisation zones, the Home Guards also unleashed a punitive wave of terror, displacing tens of thousands of Tamils.

Amid growing fears of war in the wake of the deterioration of the February 2002 ceasefire and the increasingly aggressive posture adopted by Sri Lankan security forces in the Northeast, the LTTE has now set about building a citizens' militia that can provide a measure of protection for their own villages, particularly against Army-backed irregulars, and could be drafted into relief efforts in the wake of natural disasters in other areas.

Training, conducted on a part-time basis, takes two months. Apart from fitness drills, it includes the use of small arms and grenades. Able-bodied civilians, including housewives, university students, school teachers and senior citizens are taking part, Reuters reported last month. Training is open to men and women between the ages of 20 and 55 years and attendance is not compulsory.

By late July, 3,000 people had already been trained in the Trincomalee district, LTTE spokesman Daya Master told the BBC. Several thousand more are being trained elsewhere in the Northeast. In the LTTE-held Vanni, hundreds of people have attended training courses near Kilinochchi, the coastal regions of Pooneryn and Mullaitivu.

Training is underway in several parts of the Batticaloa district also. Large numbers of residents joined the program at Kokadicholai, a village which has suffered not one, but two,

(continued on page 41)

CLASSIFIED ADS

First 20 words £10. each additional word 60p charge for Box No.£3..Prepayment essential.

The Advertisement Manager,
Tamil Times Ltd., PO Box 121,
Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD, United Kingdom
Phone: 020 - 8644 0972
Fax: 020 - 8241 4557
E-Mail: admin@tamiltimes.org

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

MATRIMONIAL

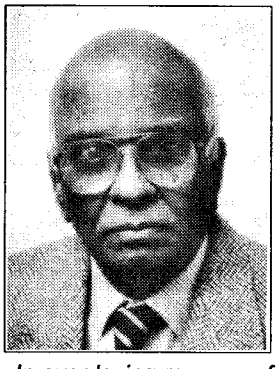
Jaffna Hindu parents *seek suitable professional partner for their UK born son, Medical Doctor, 28, working in London. Please reply with details and horoscope to M 1450 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek a handsome, tall, fair, post-graduate professional for their slim, fair, graduate daughter, 5'3", trainee accountant, UK civil service, Thiruvonum, Mars in second house. Please send details to M 1451 c/o Tamil Times.*

ABOUT PEOPLE AND EVENTS

IN MEMORIAMS

Fourth Anniversary Remembrance



In ever loving memory of ***Mr.Kanapathypillai Sitsabesan*** *on the fourth anniversary of his passing 2001 away on 5th September 2001.*
Remembered with love and affection by his children Manoharan and Savithri; daughter-in-law Rebecca; son-in-law Varathan; grandchildren Holly, Daniel and Luxmmi and brother K. Yogeshwaran (Sri Lanka)
– N.Varathan,
Flat 15, Girtin House,
44 Brighton Road, Sutton,
Surrey Sn2 5JQ.
Tel: 020 8404 6541.

Land with House for Sale

in **Jaffna, Sri Lanka**
at **344 Kandy Road, Arriyalai,**
about ½ mile from Jaffna Kachcheri on A9 road
opposite to Arasco and Peninsular Industries,
8 Larchums and 16 ¾ Kulies,
house with five rooms, two halls, kitchen and an out house
for immediate sale. For further details please telephone **01623 482 938** (UK), evenings and weekends,
or **0094112 597664** (Colombo)
or email: kruthi@yahoo.com

The Fourth Year Remembrance

30th September 2005
In ever loving and treasured memory of
Gratien Nirmalanandan Sivagnanam
The ***one*** *whom we hold most precious*
Never truly leaves us.
He lives on... in the kindness he showed,
The comfort he shared, the love and happiness
He brought to our lives.
Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his loving wife Chandra, beloved mumma, Family and Friends.

First Year Remembrance

In ever loving memory of **Mrs Vimaleswary Nadarajah** of Kokuvil, Jaffna on the first anniversary of her passing away on 17th September 2004.

Remembered with love and affection by her beloved husband Nadarajah; loving children Harindran (UK), Darshidaran (Dubai), Nihaldaran (UK), Sharmina (New Zealand) and Jamuna (UK); daughters-in-law Rahini, Subathira and Lingeswary; sons-in-law Sivashanmuganathan and Jeyakumar; grandchildren Sanjiv,Aneesha, Theevia, Satheesan, Abarna, Shinani, Shivagar, Darshan and Keeran; brother Thirugnanaselvam; sisters Rajeswary, Parameswary and Vigneswary and sister-in-law Thangamuttu. – 65 Beaminster Gardens, Ilford, Essex IG6 2BW. Tel: 020 8550 9972.

House & Property For Sale

KKS Road, Kokuvil, Srilanka
(Near Kokuvil Hindu College Junction)
6 Larchums
Further details please contact:
Tel: 020 - 8548 4071

Mr PONNUDURAI NARENDRANATHAN, *most dearly beloved and adoring husband of late Mrs Gnanambal Gnananayaki; dearest loving and proud Appa to your children, Thrinayani Jegathambal, Sowmya Wijayambal, Sobhana Meenambal, Priyadarsani Brahathambal, Adhithya Thrilochanan, Vasutharini Girijambal, Agasthya Ponnambalam and Ambika Dhakshayani; father-in-law of P Arulampalam, T Ilangovan and R Srikanthan, Meera Narendranathan and Malini Narendranathan; darling dearest Thaththa to your grandchildren, Abhirami Janani Raveendran, Amarnath Thirumadhavan Raveendran, Nirmala Arulampalam, Janaki Saruhasini Srikanthan, Janarthanan Ragavan Ilangovan, Dhivya Saraswathy Ilangovan, and Divani Kruthika Narendranathan.*

Dear Appa, your physical presence may not be here with us anymore, but the legacy you left behind is, and will be there forever guiding us through this life. Always remembered with love and pride, especially on this the eleventh anniversary of your passing away on the 24 September 1994; you are greatly missed but never forgotten; always in the thoughts of your family and friends. God Bless.

(Address: 53 Crossways, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 8JQ).

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

A Psalm of Life Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(1807 - 1882)

In Ever Loving Memory of Our Dearly Beloved Daddy
Mr. T.J.Rajaratnam, Retired High Court Judge

Called to Rest 15.9.81

In God's care you rest above
While in our hearts you dwell in love
Unseen, unheard, yet very near
Still loved, still missed and very dear.

Fondly remembered and sadly missed by your ever loving wife Arul; children Rohini, Renuka, Rajiv; sons-in-law Vijayan, Sriharan; grandchildren Vasi, Ravi, Prathi, Jayanthy and Ajit.

Fifth Anniversary Remembrance

Born: 12.08.1916 **Died: 24.09.2000**

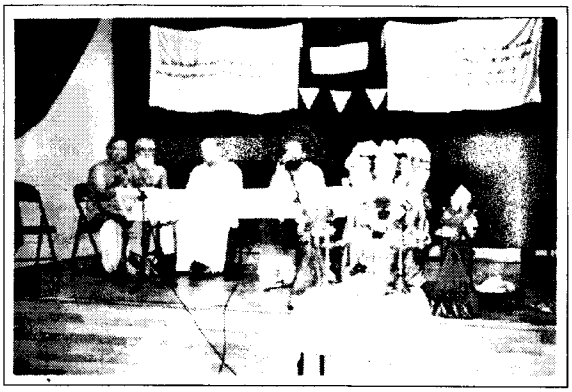
In ever loving memory of ***Mrs Pathmavathy Selvanayagam*** *of Station Road, Thamil Eelam.*
Fondly remembered with love and affection by her children; in-laws; grandchildren; great grandchildren and other relatives and friends.

Your memories are always with us- Lala, Soundari
- 6 Brook Road, Redhill, Surrey, UK.

SRI LANKA INFORMATION SITE
WWW.srilankans.com

DIY General Insurance
www.armassociates.co.uk - useful links - ARM Online Insurance

Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar's Second Anniversary Remembrance



Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar's Kurupoosai and Second Anniversary Remembrance were held at Shri Kanaga Thurrkai Amman Temple on Saturday 3rd September 2005. Srimae Kumaraswamy Thambiran Swamigal of Dharmapuram Aadheenam graced the occasion. The Remembrance was organised by the World Saiva Council (UK Branch), overseen by its president Thiru A Thevasagayam.

In his speech, Thambiran Swamigal paid tribute to Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar for the work he has done towards revival of Saivism in the West and the legacy he has left behind, urging all to continue that work. He singled out the taking of the Saiva message to the five continents through the World Saiva Council Conferences as Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar's greatest achievement, sighting that this was much more than the Mutts of India had been able to achieve even though they have been in existence for much longer period. Shanmugathas Kurukal said that Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar was passionate about Saivism and Tamil, which was evident from his achievements around the world, not least the lecture tours in South Africa. Swami Siva Nandhi Adikalaar longed for a time when the youngsters living in the west would defend Saivism against other religions taught at school here and abroad. Selvi Surekka Sriskandarajah spoke highlighting why Tamil youth are less involved in temples and Saiva worship, and what could be done to encourage this. She called for dialogue and debate. The final item was the distribution of prizes.

The World Saiva Council's next Conference, which would be the 10th in the series will be taking place in Sydney, Australia on 27, 28 & 29th January 2006.

Forthcoming Events

October 1. *Ammavasai; Puraddasi Sani (3); Feast of St. Teresa*
2. *Feast of the Guardian Angels*
3. *Navarathiri starts*
4. *Feast of St. Michael of Assisi*
6. *Sathurthi; Luxmy Pooja starts*
7. *Feast of the Queen of the Holy Rosary*
8. *Shashti; Puraddasi Sani (4)*
9. *Saraswathy Pooja*
10. "
11. "
12. *Vijayathasami & Keetharagowri; Manampoo*
13. *Eekathasi*
14. *Feast of St. Callistus*
15. *Pirathosam; Puraddasi Sani (last)*
16. *Full Moon*
17. *Feast of St. Ignatius of Antioch*
19. *Karthigai*
20. *Sankatahara Sathurthi*
25. *Feast of the Holy Martyrs of England & Wales*
28. *Eekathasi*
30. *Pirathosam*
31. *Deepavali*

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding

Ratheeswari, *daughter of Dr.V & Dr. (Mrs) Saratha Sivagnanavel of 282 Coombe Lane, West Wimbledon, London SW20 0RW and* ***Ramesh Arulkumaran*** *, son of Mr. P. & Mrs Savithri Shanmugaratnam of ¼ Railway Parade, Westmead, NSW2145, Australia on 19th August 2005 at the Le Montage, 38 Fraser Street, NSW2040, Australia..*

Hema, *daughter of Mr. & Mrs Sivalingam of 30 Overdale Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3UE and* ***Edward,*** *son of Mrs Coombes of 77 Str-etton Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6ET on 19th August 2005 at 'CHAK 89' Hall, Bond Road, Mitcham, Surrey.*

Shaumia, *daughter of Mr & Mrs Selvarajah of 48 Hallwicks Road, Luton LU2 9BH, UK and* ***Parthipan,*** *son of Mr. & Mrs Nithiananthan of 15/9, Potpathy Road, Kokuvil, Sri Lanka on 31st August 2005 at Ilan Kalaignar Manram, Nallur, Sri Lanka.*

Theeba, *daughter of Mr. & Mrs Ragunathan of Guruji Vihar, 51 Arundel Road, Kingston Surrey KT1 3RY and* ***.Arthur,*** *son of Mr. & Mrs Bames of Downs House, Fostall, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent ME13 9JG on 31st August 200s at Wandsworth Town Hall, High Street, London SW18.*

Suhaliya sparkles in Toronto's Summer of Carnatic Concerts

This summer, the connoisseurs of Carnatic music and dance in Canada have witnessed some noteworthy events by promising artistes of the future. Every year, from the foundation laid and developed especially by the Thamil Isai Kalaamanram of Ontario, more and more young people are coming into public focus and acceptance, proud of their heritage and with their skills and expertise in a culture that is precious to us.

Among them is Suhaliya, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ragunathan of Toronto, a sociology graduate of the University of Toronto, and a great-grand niece of the renowned dramatist of yester years, Kalai Arasu Chornalingam. She hails from a family deeply rooted in the traditions of our art. Her grandmother, Nades-wary Somasunderam is a much acclaimed Kathakali dancer.

Suhaliya was two years old when she showed her passion for music and dance. Her parents promptly sought the help of Kalasoori Arunthathy Ranganathan, a visiting lecturer of Kelaniya University in Sri Lanka and Indian Cultural Centre, to be her guru. When the family moved to Canada, she became a sishya of Isai Kala-imani Kulanayaki Vivekana-nthan, and under her she continued her devoted and disciplined gurukula tradition in learning the arts

Although Suhaliya has consistently participated in public concerts and as a vocalist in Bharata Natyam recitals, she took her time to have her vocal arangetram until she had finished her ear-

lier part of university education. In doing so, she brought a good deal of maturity to her debut performance on Sunday July 24, 2005 at Toronto's Markham Theatre.

Her concert was very enjoyable. She performed like a seasoned artiste especially when it came to Carnatic music's unique aspect of improvisation. This brings out the artiste's special talents and her depth of understanding the meanings of ragas and the confidence she has to explore the ranges in various directions while keeping to the rules that generally govern them. The critics may find it hard on their ears but in Carnatic music, those who cannot value the vast grounds improvisation offer will have no credence.

A good example of Suhaliya's expertise is how she explored the raga Shankarabaranam, the piece de resistance of the evening, in Ragam, Thanam, Pallavi. While rendering this, she refused to be confined within a rigid framework and gave immense pleasure to the audience by exploring into the fringes as well. Her exposition was smooth and virtually flawless which itself speaks enormously of her talents and the determination to excel as a vocalist. Her trained voice evidently gave her great facility to render the variety of compositions she had chosen for the evening with acute gamakas and sangathis.

Suhaliya began her arangetram concert with G N Balasubramaniam's Anboruha Padame in the Ranjani raga and drifted spontaneously, and with the enterprise and delight deserving of the Nattai raga, into the piece Shakthi Ganapathim composed by Muthaiya Bhagavathar. Her selections for the evening also included Saint Tyagaraja's Sadhinjane, Marukelara, and the ever popular Nagumomu Ganaleni in the Arabhi, Jayanthasri and Abheri ragas respectively, Annamacharya's Brahmam Onru Than (Bowli), Mysore Vasudevacharya's Ninne Nammithi (Simhendra Madhyamam), Chitra Balraj's Kanna Va (Madhuvanthi), and a bhajan in Yaman Kalyani raga.

Towards the end of her recital, she treated her audience to a spiritually uplifting and heart warming Virutham and followed it with Gnanam Krishaiyar's Jagaj Janani in Ragamalika. She concluded her arangetram with a lively Thillana in Dharbari Kanada raga composed by Tanjavore Kalyana Raman.

She was accompanied by Kalpana Venkat (Violin), Gowrishankar Balachandran (Mridangam), Ravi Subramaniam (Ghatam), Sri Ram Suryanarayan (Kenjira) and Abhiramy Vivekananthan (Tambura).

The evening was graced by the presence Kalaimamani Kalanidhi Bhushany Kalyanaraman of Kalakshetra as the chief guest and Thampiah Siripathy President of Thamil Isai Kalaamanram and Sivasamboo Sridas as guest speakers.

FROM ARIZONA TO ASHCROFT
JANANI'S BHARATA NATYA ARANGETRAM

The old traditional saying "Arayil Adi Ambalathitku Varavendum".- is expressed in Arangetram. The inner mind is our Arangu and Ambalam is the artiste expressing Godly feelings on the stage, to the audience.

Abhirami Janani, even as a child, would capture everyone with her innocent smile. When I sang Subramania Bharathi's " Chinanchirukiliae", she expressed the meaning through her eyes. .It struck me that this little girl had the cool spring the poet had in his mind. This is not possible if one does not have the inner most sanctity and feeling. To me she was "kanamma" at that moment revealing the true form the poet had in his mind.

Janani had her Arangetram in Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon, on Sunday 24th July 2005. We were privileged to be there, to witness this devoted pupil and dancer, who has achieved this stage through hard work and commitment, prove to us that she has understood the nuances of Bharata Natyam – a fete in itself. I felt proud to see a Varisu of my husband's family bring so much pleasure.

She began her Natyanjali, by offering her devoted prayers to the five deities. This item itself immediately spelt out this young dancer's ability to capture people's minds with her confident performance.

The Navagraha Sabdam, a unique and interesting composition by Veena Sesha Iyer, with a challenging and interesting choreography next enthralled all and Janani perfected this to her best.

Varnam – a colourful- and the piece de resistance of a Bharata Natya repertoire in Sudha Dhanyasi, dedicated to Lord Muruga was the next big challenge for Janani. The lyrics swing from describing Murugan as a mischievous child and later a lover and a hero of valour. Janani through her Abhinaya was equally able to swing from one episode to another, with complete ease and confidence. Her Bhavam was so capturing, that the audience sat mesmerised. Even her pure dance sequences – Nritta – were clean, strong and sturdy.

We looked forward to the second half of the repertoire with excitement and of course Janani did not disappoint us!

The well-known popular Keerthanam dedicated to Lord Nataraja in Kamas Ragam, took us to Thillai and the measured and decent rendering of the Tandava captured and impressed all.

The Padam describing Meenakshi Kalyanam was an aptly selected composition for Janani and the excellent choreography enabled her to bring out the best. Her Guru had helped her transit from childhood to a young damsel and a princess with ease and confidence. The baby smile of Janani developing later into a shy and joyful smile of a young girl and also her portrayal of Meenakshi as a bride was so emotional and moving.

The short programme, which was an unusual and a welcoming change to the more lengthy repertoires we have been accustomed to, culminated in a joyful exuberance of Thillana in Kuntalavarali. Needless to say the tireless Janani sprung into action and clearly enjoyed performing.

Of course, it is true to say that all this would not have been possible without the commitment of able Gurus. This young child was fortunate to have three Gurus. Janani, had her initial training under Guru Smt Asha Gopal in Phoenix, USA at the Arathi School of Dance. Later, she came under the tutelage of Smt Pushkala Gopal and Sri Unnikrishnan of Mudralaya in London.

The preparation of Janani for the Arangetram and all the choreography credits go to Smt Pushkala Gopal, ably assisted by Unni. Having devoted and exacting teachers always reflects on the students. This was proved to be true on July 24th. The clean and exacting performance was indeed due to the excellent tutelage.

The whole programme was without doubt brought to light by the excellent and coordinated supporting artistes. Balu's Mridangam no doubt helped bring out the best through his masterly rendition, which is always essential for a Bharata Natya programme. Equally, the support from young Yathavan who through his mellifluous and commanding voice gave more colour to the compositions should be thanked for his

contribution.

In addition, the colour built in by Sri Ramani Thiagarajan the flautist, Sri Gnanasundaram on the violin and Smt Malini Thanabalasingham on the veena, completed the collage and the tapestry.

I should not fail to mention Janani's mother, Meena, who has been equally committed in ensuring high standards and perfection in her beloved child. She has worked really hard in encouraging Janani to pursue her love and devoted interest in this Godly form of art. It has no doubt paid dividends!!

The chief guest Prof. N S Jeyalakshmi, herself a well known exponent and renowned and revered teacher who hailed from Kalakshetra, praised Janani and was in fact truly taken up by young Janani's dedication. She privately shared with me her true feelings and told us that she was pleasantly surprised by Janani's standard and commitment. Her wish is that this child's talents should not go to waste.

Janani dedicated her Arangetram to her beloved grand father, late Mr Narendranathan. It was also a pleasure to see her grand mother 'Payei' – Mrs Narendranathan there, enjoying and relishing Janani's achievements and also showering her blessings. Alas, shortly after this, Mrs Narendranathan passed away. But no doubt both grand parents will continue to watch Janani's progress and shower blessings.

My ardent wish is for this young and talented – but most importantly- committed child Janani, to continue with this divine form of art, wherever she is. May God bless her.

Mrs G Sivapathasundaram

Seychelles Newsletter

Although the Tamil speaking people are Seychelles are 3 or 4 % of the population, the third week of August saw Tamil week in full bloom in the capital of Seychelles - Victoria. For the first time in this country the Tamils were entertained to a continuous four day programme of Lecture, Debates and Discussions, including a question-answer series on the values and virtues of Tamil language and its literary values. It was a good mix of Thirukural, Kambaramayanam and Thiruvasagam. The event was organised by the Seychelles Tamil Development Centre (STCDC) on the eve of the release of the quarterly malar of ALAI OSAI. The third issue was released by Kambavarithi Jeyaraj and was accepted by the Honourable Justice Durai Karunakaran, Judge of the Supreme Court of Seychelles. There was a Vivatha Arangam led by Sri Prashanthan of Sri Lanka and Professor V.Sabanayagam of Tamil Nadu, judged by Kambavarithi Jeyaraj on Tamil Culture is being preserved by the changing generation in which four speakers debated the topic on each side. A series of lectures were delivered on all the four days by Kambavarithi Jeyaraj and Sri Prashanthan of Thinakural and on the final day a full-grown Co Co de Mer (Thiruvodu) fruit was presented to the Kamban Kazlagam by Mr.N.Ramini on behalf of the STCDC

This was followed by a special lecture on Values and Pleasures of Poetry by the visiting Professor V.Sabanayagam of Viruthasalam in India

- V. Sivasupramaniam

(continued from page 36)

large-scale massacres by the SLA. Over 350 residents joined the scheme at Thikilivadai village, Eelanatham reported in July. Other programs were underway at Kithul and Urugamam, the paper said.

On August 11 training was formally initiated in the Pachilaipali region of Jaffna for an estimated 2,000 civilians by Mr S. Thangan, the Deputy head of the LTTE's Political Wing. Training also began in Aliyavalai and Uduthurai regions of Vadamarachchi East this week. The Virakesari newspaper reported that residents in these Jaffna villages had pressured commanders at the nearby Sea Tiger base to provide them with basic training. The region is close to the Muhamalai frontlines and is in the line of advance of any SLA offensive into the Vanni.

Amid anxieties of renewed war, the security dilemma has emerged: efforts to strengthen village level self-defence capacity amid fears of renewed war has, in turn, heightened anxieties that the LTTE is raising a large army for a new offensive. The Tigers have denied this, reiterating commitment to the ceasefire, and sought to reassure concerns.

"We are not doing this because war is imminent but if there is a war imposed on us, the people will want to protect themselves," Mr. Daya Master told reporters. "The people need this training for their own safety," he told Reuters, adding, moreover, that those being trained will not fight alongside the LTTE's troops if war does break out. Indeed, the limited training being given to the civilians is a far cry from the rigorous six-month infantry course that LTTE recruits go through.

But the availability of large numbers of lightly armed militia based in their home villages will allow the LTTE to mimic the SLA's strategy of using mobile, well trained troops to respond to attacks in strength, whilst also providing a pool of trained volunteers to be drawn on in the case of natural disasters such as another tsunami.

The availability of large numbers of lightly armed militia based in their home villages will allow the LTTE to mimic the SLA's strategy of using mobile, well trained troops to respond to attacks.

Interestingly, the utility and cost effectiveness of lightly-armed militia with limited training has been raised recently in the United States in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001, by analysts who argue the National Guard has become too heavily armed and well trained a force to be cost-effective in homeland security or, indeed, even to be considered a 'militia' as stipulated by its constitutional mandate.

Apart from the National Guard, 19 states maintain official militia which "consist of volunteers who train [for security tasks] and also provide emergency and community support services," Colonel (retd) John R. Brinkerhoff, pointed out in a paper titled "Restore the Militia for Homeland Security."

He argues moreover, that "some of the large numbers of military personnel needed to defend America [at home] can be provided at low cost by using militia to provide troops for the governors to use to maintain law and order and protect the citizens of their states in the face of the full range of emergencies." *(Courtesy of :Tamil Guardian)* ❑

Western Jewellers
Opening Hours
Monday to Saturday10.00am - 6.30pm
Sunday 11.00am - 5.30pm
SILK EMPORIUM
122 Upper Tooting Road, London SW17 7EN
Tel: 020 8672 1900
WESTERN
Jewellers &Textiles
5 Plaza Parade, 29 - 33 Ealing Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4YA
Tel: 020 8903 0909

airfare direct

Call us on....
Tel: 0845 230 9262
(local rate)
or
Tel: 020 8340 2121

Call us for more information on Sri Lankan Airlines Golf Classic

Australia Return
£665 + Taxes
Free Stopover in Colombo & Singapore
(Till 9th December)

Colombo
£360 + Taxes (Till 18th Sept)
£390 + Taxes (18th Sept - 30th Nov)

Johannesburg / Cape Town
£330 + Taxes (20th Aug - 30th Nov)

Dubai / Abu Dhabi / Bahrain
£215 + Taxes
(20th Aug - 30th Nov)

Incredible India
Madras/ Bangalore/ Thiruvanthapuram/ Cochin
£325 + Taxes (1st Sep - 30th Nov)
(Selected Flights)

SriLankan

Colombo Return
£410 + Taxes
(1st Aug - 18th Sept)
(Selected Flights)

Bombay / Delhi
£295 + Taxes (20th Aug - 30th Nov)

Singapore / Kuala Lumpur
£390 + Taxes (20th Aug - 30th Nov)

Singapore / Kuala Lumpur / Bangkok / Hong Kong
£360 + Taxes (Stopover in Colombo not Permitted)
£450 + Taxes Free Stopover in Colombo

218 Archway Road
Highgate
London N6 5AX
Fax - 020 8340 8826
Email - info@holidays2srilanka.com

TAILOR-MADE TRAVEL
Sri Lanka - Singapore - Thailand - India - Malaysia

IATA

All major cards accepted

4 Metro Centre
Ronsons Way
St Albans Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 9QT
Fax 0870 350 0153

Travel RIGHT

82 MITCHAM ROAD
TOOTING
SW17 9NG

The RIGHT people to do business with

MAIN AGENT FOR SriLankan Airlines, Qatar Airways, Royal Jordanian, Egyptair, Garuda Indonesia

SRI LANKAN AIRLINES
COLOMBO
fr £410+Taxes
1st Aug to 18th Sep
On selected flights only

MADRAS, COCHIN, BANGALORE, TRIVANDRUM
fr £325+Taxes

HONG KONG, BANGKOK, SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr £360+Taxes

QATAR AIRWAYS
COLOMBO
fr £360+Taxes
valid until 18 Sep

COCHIN, TRIVANDRUM HYDERABAD
fr £385+Taxes

SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr £390+Taxes

DUBAI
fr £215+Taxes

Call Us for Srilankan Airlines Special family Fare to COLOMBO & INDIA

COLOMBO £360+TAXES
TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY
Bangkok £380+ tax,
Singapore £390+ tax,
Dubai £205 + tax, Bombay £335 + tax,
Trivandrum & Cochin £355 + tax
Kuala Lumpur & Manilla £355 + tax

London to Sri Lanka - Special Offer
£410.00 +Taxes
TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

Family Fares available to Colombo and India on SriLankan Airlines - Call Now

FARES AVAILABLE ON ALL AIRLINES

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS

020 8767 7775
FAX: 020 8767 5991, MOBILE 07850 876921
E-MAIL: info@skybooker.com

IATA

ATOL 75766

✪TRAVEL ✪ SHIPPING ✪ AIR FREIGHT ✪TRAVEL ✪ SHIPPING ✪ AIR FREIGHT✪

Send Your Friends & family a gift

Unaccompanied Baggage by Sea or Air
Fortnightly Shipments

Our Bonded Warehouse in Srilanka
LAKSIRISEVA
66 New Nuge Road
Peliyagoda

NEXT SAILING
23 SEPT 2005
ETA COLOMBO **11** OCT 2005

07 OCT 2005
ETA COLOMBO **25** OCT 2005

GLEN CARRIERS

GLEN CARRIERS LTD

The most trusted in the business

Service to the Sri Lankan Community **20** Years

MOST COMPETITIVE AIRFARES TO COLOMBO & OTHER WORLD WIDE DESTINATIONS

Fly Home with the The most trusted and reliable name in the trade

Srilankan Airlines	Qatar Airways	Kuwait Airways	Royal Jordanian	Etihad Airways
from £ 410 +Taxes valid 01 Aug - 18 Sep (FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS APPLY)	from £ 390 +Taxes valid 20 Aug - 31 Oct	from £ 370 +Taxes valid 01 Aug - 01 Nov	from £ 320 +Taxes valid 17 Aug - 10 Dec	from £ 385 +Taxes valid 20 Aug - 30 Nov

Extensions Available from Sri Lankan Airline to the following Destination: Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Madras, Trevandrum, Trichi, Bombay or Delhi

MADRAS, COCHIN, TRIVANDRUM - £325
(Conditions apply - alll Fares excluding taxes

Ring us for
SPECIAL FAMILY FARES

14 Allied Way, off Warple Way, Acton, London, W3 0RQ
Tel: 020 8740 8379, 020 8749 0595, 020 8743 7353, Fax: 020 8740 4229
Email: glencarriers@aol.com Website: http://www.glencarriers.co.uk

ALL FARES EXCLUDE TAXES - TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY - CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED SUBJECT TO TERMS

SKY WINGS LTD

MAIN AGENT FOR

TRAVEL AGENT

"Sky wings.....Where the Sun never sets"

MAIN AGENT FOR

Simply the best in Price & Service

SRILANKAN AIRLINES

COLOMBO
fr **£410**+Taxes
1st Aug to 18th Sep
On selected flights only

MADRAS, COCHIN, BANGALORE, TRIVANDRUM
fr **£325**+Taxes

HONG KONG, BANGKOK, SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr **£360**+Taxes

QATAR AIRWAYS

COLOMBO
fr **£360**+Taxes
valid until 18 Sep

COCHIN, TRIVANDRUM HYDERABAD
fr **£385**+Taxes

SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
fr **£390**+Taxes

DUBAI
fr **£215**+Taxes

COLOMBO £360+TAXES
TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY
Bangkok **£380**+ tax,
Singapore **£390**+tax,
Dubai **£205** + tax, Bombay **£335** + tax,
Trivandrum & Cochin **£355** + tax
Kuala Lumpur & Manilla **£355** + tax

London to Sri Lanka - Special Offer
£410.00 +Taxes
TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

Family Fares available to Colombo and India on SriLankan Airlines - Call Now

Call Us for Srilankan Airlines Special family Fare to COLOMBO & INDIA

FARES AVAILABLE ON ALL AIRLINES

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OUR STAFF ON

020 8672 9111

119 HIGH STREET, TOOTING, LONDON SW17 0SY
mobile: 07850876921 (24 hours) Web: www.skywings.co.uk E-mail: bala@skywings.co.uk

IATA ATOL 75766